

JUNE

COMMENTARY

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IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF COMMENTARY

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COMMENTARY

WHY JEWS IN THE WORLD?

A Reaffirmation of Faith in Israel's Destiny

LEO S. BAECK

WHY are Jews and Judaism in the world? No one would dare to say that either is a comfortable thing for the world. Nor, perhaps, would any Jew say that the Jews are a comfortable thing for themselves. Neither the Jewish religion nor the Jewish heritage is an easy one. And there can be no easy Judaism. It was the Reform movement's mistake to have tried at times to supply Jews with a Judaism that was too un-

exacting, too comfortable, with a Judaism that reminded itself of its own nature as infrequently as possible. And some of our friends also made the mistake of looking for a quiet and unassertive Judaism that made itself noticed as little as possible.

But the question why Jews were in the world could not be suppressed, and continued to arise, inside oneself or outside, softly or loudly.

Why indeed are they in the world? One thing is agreed on concerning the Jews: that they are a gifted race, of a peculiar and original nature. As Theophrastus, the friend and successor of Aristotle, said, they are a "philosophical race." A genuine giftedness, especially for philosophy, is never a comfortable thing, either for those endowed with it and fated some day to become aware of it, or for those whose habits of life and thought it disturbs. As the Book of Ecclesiastes says, "he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." This is wherein genuine giftedness differs from superficial giftedness; the latter remains pleasant and disturbs no one, but the former comes from the depths and reaches into the depths, unsettling complacency. To have things easy means all too often curbing giftedness or closing one's mind to it.

Here we have the beginning of our answer. Jews and Judaism are in the world by

LEO S. BAECK, chief rabbi of Berlin and a distinguished modern scholar, served his people in pre-Hitler Germany, during the Nazi regime, and in the concentration camps. Since the liberation he has become known throughout Europe and in America as one of the great spiritual personalities to have emerged from the war. In the Theresienstadt camp he set an example of moral courage, wisdom, and unflinching faith that was a rock of strength to his congregation of thirty-five thousand in the face of Nazi brutality and the always-present threat of death. Dr. Baeck, at 74, lives today in London, occupied in writing on the religious meaning of Jewish experience. One of the first fruits of these creative labors is this essay, with its challenging reaffirmation of faith in the unique moral role of Jews in the world of today, as in the past. Dr. Baeck is the author of a number of books, including *The Hebrew Religion* (New York, 1930), *Die Pharisäer* (Berlin, 1934), and *The Essence of Judaism* (London, 1936); another volume is to be published soon by Schocken Books.

virtue of the right granted by giftedness and by virtue of the duty giftedness imposes.

THE term, "world," the "world of man," demands a certain qualification. Jews and Judaism ever since they entered history have lived only in one half of the world. As far as we can look back, the world of man has always been divided into two parts, historically and culturally, by a line running northward and southward across the highest mountains on earth, the Himalayas. One part was and is the world that has Jews, and the other part is the world without Jews. On the whole, the world with Jews is west of this north-south line. (There are exceptions, but they hardly matter here.)

Jews and Judaism have had their place in this world now for three thousand years. It took the Jews a thousand years to become conscious and sure of themselves—to come to themselves, as it were—and, in the two thousand years since, they have penetrated deeper and deeper into the Western world, though they have had mentally to contend with this world again and again, and this world has had mentally to contend with them. The world with Jews differs from the world without Jews precisely in the fact that it has had and still has to contend with them mentally. But is this the only difference between the two worlds?

Another factor that has contributed largely to the shaping of our Western world is Greek culture, without which that world cannot be imagined. But it is a historical fact deserving of much meditation that living Greek culture should have repeatedly prepared the way and place for Jewish ideas. This was the case under the Hellenistic Roman empire and it was also the case at the time of the humanistic Renaissance—and sometimes one feels that it may be the case again in the future. In view of this connection between Greek culture and Jewish ideas, it may not be too much to say therefore that the one and essential reason for the difference between the Western and Eastern worlds is indeed the presence of Jews and Judaism in the one, and their absence in the other.

IT is of the essence of Jewish thought and commandment that they have a wider and deeper human and social reach than have other ways of thought and commandment. Wherever they penetrate, whether directly or indirectly, they stir up a ferment and an excitement in the souls of men and in the forms of the community, causing more violent inner upheavals than other ideas do. Something emanates from them that rouses inner conflicts, and these lead of necessity to a clarification, not only—as do other ideas—of the mind, but also of the soul; they affect not only politics, but every other problem of the community. One cannot approach Jewish ideas merely to look and pass on; one is compelled to take an attitude towards them. A certain dynamism entered the world with them, a lasting ferment that constantly generates something new in the soul and the community, a holy discontent and disappointment which are yet never discontented and disappointed enough to turn away from the world and give up the struggle, but which rather again and again return to the world in the effort to shape it and make it better and nobler by the force of new ideas.

To see what all this means, one has only to take a look at that world which has been without Jews. True, here and there in this other world things similar to Judaism are seen. The law taught by the old Chinese philosophy and laid down in the constitution founded upon it seems reminiscent of Jewish law: thus, some have compared Confucius to Moses. But it is just the similarities between the two that show how great the differences are. The aim of Chinese law was to make sure that the world it governed remained always as it was, and indeed China, under that law, did remain for ages what it had been. But Jewish law is a living, unappeasable urge towards a way that leads onward and onward.

It has also been pointed out that Indian thought is focused on the question of the ultimate meaning of everything, the question of the *one* existence, which is the same question of questions that has from the beginning occupied and never ceased to occupy

the Jewish spirit. The Greek historian Megasthenes, who had lived in India for a number of years, compared the Jews to the Brahmins as well as to the Greeks. But again what seems proximity reveals even greater distance. Indian thought held that the one being is only being and nothing else, mere being that rests within itself, being without relation to the world. Therefore one must abandon and relinquish the world in order to attain to being. Hence India was permitted for long ages to remain as it was in the world, and no one was disturbed by caste, slavery, or the idolatry on all sides.

But for Jewish thought the one being always implies at the same time a commandment, a demand. Speaking in every hour its distinct word to man, it does not permit him to deny, reject, or relinquish the world, to ignore what is faulty or evil. It demands that he grapple with the world in order to make it better. It says: this, here, now—this is the reality of the ideal commandment.

Thus one sees how different are the two worlds of West and East: throughout the centuries the one lacked the dynamism that penetrated the other, the dynamism that originated in Judaism and the Jews. And that is why both the latter are in the world—for the sake of dynamism, or, to put it more distinctly, for the sake of ethical dynamism.

IT WAS through Judaism that ethical dynamism entered the world. Judaism first experienced that great unconditional "thou shalt" which the one God speaks. This "thou shalt" arises from the very foundation of reality, and it presents reality to man, the full and fundamental reality. One can and may doubt everything—and what is there that has not been doubted in Judaism?—except "thou shalt." Everything may be questioned—and what is there that has not been questioned in Judaism, or submitted to varying interpretations?—except "thou shalt."

The one God is known and understood in the "thou shalt"; when the "thou shalt" is denied and rejected God is denied and rejected. And because the great "thou shalt" contains the reality, it also contains the great

hope: thus hope itself becomes a commandment, hope too becomes an unconditional, categorical postulation. Thou shalt hope! Revelation, ethical task, and promise are here one. This is the revelation, the "logos" of God, the totality of the commandment, the Torah, which, according to ancient simile, was "before the creation of the world."

Precisely here can we see where Greek and Jewish thought are related and where divorced. For Greek thought the logos is reason and its logical, ideational expression; for Jewish thought the logos is reason and its logical, ethical expression. For Greek thought logic remains within itself and is only logic, while ethics stands alongside it as something different. For Jewish thought logic alone and for itself is meaningless: the stronger logic is ethics. For Greek thought the creation of the world is merely cosmological, ethically indifferent; for Jewish thought creation and commandment have the same origin, so that the ethical cannot be without the world and the world cannot be without the ethical. Greek thought is devoid of the absolute certainty of the commandment and of the enthusiasm arising from it; for Jewish thought the commandment is the reality of life, the truth of reality, and all passion and all pathos flow together in the realization of the commandment. Judaism stands and falls with the great "I am the Eternal—thou shalt."

The one God says to man "thou shalt." Double morality, double law, the double way are equal to polytheism, idolatry. The foundation is in the one God, fully in him and in nothing else but him, and no utility, no power, no politics, no convenience, may claim to be that foundation. In the "thou shalt" man experiences most intensely who he is, and comes to know most vividly his own personality, his individual self, and the peculiarity or uniqueness of his own life.

This is the deepest root of the Jewish religion: the individuality, the personality, the identity is bound up with the foundation of all being and all commandment. That is why this religion can never be a mere matter that is administered—neither a matter of state,

as it was deemed in former times, nor a private matter, as was held later on, in the justifiable struggle against state religion. This religion cannot be something next to something else, for it expresses the substance and essence of man and of the individual. What is at stake in this religion is the self, the I, the ever-growing self, which has the certainty of possessing not simply a sequence of days but an individual life of its own. The great "thou shalt" which the one God speaks to everyone makes man truly man, makes his life truly *the* life.

At the time when the books of the Bible were being put together in one book, one of these books—probably the last written—was included after some wavering and hesitation. It was a small book meant to tell the Greek-minded of the sceptical Hellenistic period what Judaism was, and it tried to do that from their Greek point of view and in the way of Greek thinking of those times. For the writer, Judaism meant the same thing as true humanity. Sentence by sentence he tries to show that the Greek point of view and way of thinking provide no certainty, no foundation for reality, that they permit everything that arises and exists and passes, everything considered useful, powerful, beautiful, wise, and valid, to be subjected to doubt, so that the ultimate outcome is senselessness, the senselessness of having man *called* man without *being* man in reality. And then, after having put a question mark after each of two hundred sentences and drawn away the basis of everything any of these sentences maintained, the writer adds just one more, one last sentence, a quite short one—to be said, in the jesting phrase of the Talmud, "in the short time a man can stand on one leg." That sentence tells that which after all the doubts and disillusionment now stands up all the stronger, on all the firmer foundation, that which alone has foundation and sense and is secure against all doubt: "The conclusion, in which we shall understand all, is: fear the one God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole of man."

The *whole* man is the man who has "the whole heart, the whole soul, the whole

might," the man wholly himself, with an individuality, a personality. There is only one individuality, the one that is creative, and the man who fulfills God's commandment is creative, for he makes reality real, creates reality. And everyone is endowed with this genius, this creative power, this possibility of creating reality. And this too is the freedom vested in everyone, for there is only one fundamental freedom—ethical freedom, the freedom that creates reality. There is no freedom by gift—only the *possibility* of such freedom is given, only this creative, ethical freedom, this fulfillment of the individuality. Without it political and civic freedom would lack all foundation. And it is in this fundamental thing, in the demand that individuality and freedom be *acquired* and proven, that Judaism pre-eminently expresses its peculiarity—even more, its formative principle.

Why are Jews and Judaism in the world? We can now answer at greater length. They are in the world as witnesses and standard-bearers of the great "thou shalt" which the one God speaks to men so that men may fulfill it and thus have individuality and freedom arise in them, and because of which life becomes a reality to them and a real community unites them.

INDIVIDUALITY and community—or, what is the same, ethical freedom in the individual and in the community—belong together. For man can achieve individuality neither through egoism nor anchoretism, but only through work for others. And a plurality of human beings, even if living together in the same place, can become a community not by uniformity but only by bringing their individualities together. Where individualities are suppressed the community itself is destroyed, and only compulsion can keep it together thereafter—compulsion which is something artificial, unreal, inorganic. Only ethical freedom and individuality are reality and bring about development.

To create such reality on earth and prepare a place for it, to found a world of such freedom, of such a community of individual-

ities, that has been the great Jewish hope. This hope, like every genuine hope, is at the same time a task. The language of Judaism has shaped a specific phrase for it: to establish the Kingdom of God on earth, or, as the old prayer puts it, to "bring about a world through the Kingdom of God." It was for a man, it was said, to create a place for God on earth. God made the earth, but now man was to make it a realm of God. This is a tremendous challenge. The full infinity of the commandment—and this infinity begins anew with every man—finds its expression here. It was this infinity that frightened and shook Paul. He stood affrighted before the commandment which is infinite and therefore can never be fulfilled by temporal man; he stood affrighted before the demand for a Kingdom on earth of the infinite God, something which man, being finite, cannot accomplish.

Paul's longing for a salvation that would lead man to a perfection, a goal, shrank from this demand. Hence he fled into the complete miracle, the miracle of salvation. Hence he taught that all "thou shalts" were in vain, that man by himself could not create freedom and community and could not prepare the place for God; he taught that all these things could only be a gift, a gift of divine grace, and this gift, salvation itself, could be bestowed only on him who fully believed in this grace, in this salvation, and in the savior who brought it. Thus Judaism and the old Gospel were relinquished, the infinite task set before man was rejected. The words, "with all thine heart, with all thy soul, with all thy might," were to mean no more the way of the deed, but the way of faith. Verily, the ways parted here.

For Judaism the commandment that man fulfills, the deed of piety he performs, is the decisive thing. Here faith is the certainty that grows out of this decision. And this decision in favor of reality, in favor of the truth of life, is the decision for justice and love, as is solemnly stressed again and again. Justice and love are the expression and proof of freedom and they create individuality and community. And they are the way that leads

to the fellow man. Here the fellow man was discovered, so to speak.

Justice is the discovery and the acknowledgment flowing from it that the other has his life and therefore the right to his life, just as I myself have. Love is the discovery and the acknowledgment flowing from it that the other has his soul and therefore the right to his soul, just as I myself have. Both terms have here acquired a new, purely human content. It was like sunrise in the history of mankind when this new light arose. Here justice is not merely allegiance to the law set down by the powerful or the majority simply because they have power—it is above all allegiance to that which is due him who is powerless and which he may claim precisely because he is powerless.

In the same way love is here lifted into a yet higher sphere, lifted above the realm of legitimate sensuality and that of mere friendship—it means hearing the soul of the other, listening to its revelation. Justice and love are here the *one* that the one God demands: that truth and unity be in man and truth and unity be among men, and that thus the truth and oneness of God be acknowledged. Such justice and such love are the divine service.

Why are Jews and Judaism in the world? The answer now takes its conclusive form. They are in the world so that mankind in its diversity may not forget what unity and truth are, may not forget that justice and love alone prepare the way, may not forget its task and goal, which is to establish the kingdom of God. Why are Judaism and Jews in the world? They are in the world as witnesses—and here every witness becomes a herald, and every herald a pioneer. They are in the world as witnesses, heralds, and pioneers of the one God.

BECAUSE they are all these, the Jews and Judaism had and have as their duty to stand up and oppose many things in the present, even if they are the only ones to do so. And thus they have taken on themselves the destiny and task of being different, even if they are the only ones to be

different. And for this they have often been bitterly resented, for they have troubled many a uniformity, disturbed many a symmetry. When paganism lay spread over the world in all its multifarious uniformity all the nations had their part in it—except only the Jews. When Rome, having taken over Greek culture, had established its imperial world of culture, all the many nations within its reach were ready in the end to enter wholly into it—except only the Jews. When the Church created its ever-expanding and all-embracing world, all countries were ready, sooner or later, to become its provinces—except only the Jews. And it has been the same in many another sphere. The Jews were and remained the exception.

What would the world be without Jews and Judaism? Most probably, almost surely, a world with less brain-racking and a more appeased conscience, but a world that contained no exception—and the world is alive also because of its exceptions.

It is neither easy nor convenient to be the exception, and thereby the first in so many cases to receive the thrust. It is hard to stand in opposition until the very last day before the Kingdom of God is established in the world. Two things were necessary to the Jews to enable them to persist in this role, two qualities that the Jews possessed and seem, indeed, to have created: ethical imagination and historical patience.

There are many kinds of imagination possessed by many people, and there is also the artistic imagination, which some few possess. But the ethical imagination is something peculiar to itself. It shapes the picture of the "thou shalt," the one picture of the inseparable individuality and community, the one picture of the inseparable ethical and social task, the picture of that humanity which can alone be the goal, and the picture of the way leading to this goal. It is the imagination filled with the great vision.

Because Jews possessed that imagination, historical patience, too, became theirs. There is a patience that will endure all efforts and disappointments; this is a passive

patience. And then there is a patience that is ready to begin from the beginning all over again; this is an active patience. Both kinds think of tomorrow. But historical patience, which also endures and begins all over again, is something else and something more. It thinks always of the ultimate and therefore in terms of centuries; its word is the word coined by Jewish genius: "from generation to generation." It is the patience of the endless way.

This imagination and patience could be born only from a great certainty about what is real, whole, and lasting, only from the certainty of the one God and of his commandment and his promise.

What would the world be without Jews and Judaism? Perhaps, or surely, a world that often believed that it had already attained the goal, and often congratulated itself on the progress it had made—but for all that a world without the great vision and without the great will to the way. And it is by these two that the world lives.

It is not easy, and sometimes it is perhaps the hardest thing on earth, to be the eternal exception, to hold fast always to historical patience and ethical imagination. Sometimes Jews have hidden themselves from this role, sometimes they have fled from before it. Also, Jews have sometimes placed themselves before Judaism, covering it, standing in its way. There have been quite a number of Jews who shunned the questions put by Judaism, and there have been such as shunned the answers it gave. It is not easy to fill the requirements and duties of Jewish identity, to show this faithfulness to oneself and to the thousands of years of the past, as well as to the days to come. It is not easy always to live one's present out in permanent Judaism and always to have one's Judaism permanent in the present.

BUT for a long time the Jews have had two inner sureties to make them certain of the place of history and the future. One is their longing for a place of their own on earth, and this longing for the land of their fathers has remained in their hearts with

its poetry and its obligations. Now the old longing has returned anew to become history, historic reality. The other surety has consisted in the customs and statutes that grew up around the Jew's life, this "hedge around the Torah" to guarantee his will to preserve his identity.

This "hedge" has had its changing fortunes. Sometimes it prevented those inside it from looking out at the world, and sometimes it prevented those outside it from seeing Judaism. Those assigned to guard it forgot sometimes that a hedge has to be pruned from time to time in order to stay alive. And it was sometimes forgotten by both great and small that the hedge is not

an end in itself but is there only that Jews may be Jews in this world. On the other hand, others have come to think the hedge superfluous, its usefulness outlived. Yet, until the last days are fulfilled, Jews will not be able to dispense with it. It is there for the sake of the Jews and Judaism, it helps keep them in the world for the world's sake.

Yes, for the world's sake may they persist in the world from generation to generation. One might almost say, to vary the epigram of a man who understood a great many things but little of Jews and Judaism, that if the Jews and Judaism were not on earth one would have had to invent them.

F. SCOTT FITZGERALD AND LITERARY ANTI-SEMITISM

A Footnote on the Mind of the 20's

MILTON HINDUS

I RECENTLY read *The Great Gatsby* for the first time, and it struck me that in all the praise of the book I had heard from both Jews and non-Jews, something important had been omitted—that viewed in a certain light the novel reads very much like an anti-Semitic document. It is an excellent novel, no doubt of that, and part of its appeal is that the reader knows (though he may be unable to define his knowledge) that the story and the characters are general and representative rather than particular and confined. Fitzgerald has written a tragic satire on American civilization, with the implicit invitation to disentangle the idea of which the personages and events are outward symbols. The individuals portrayed stand for the classes (but not in the Marxian sense) to which they belong. That is nothing new: the same is true of every serious literary work of art.

The Jew who appears in *The Great Gatsby* is not the villain of the piece, but he is easily its most obnoxious character. His name is Meyer Wolfsheim. He is a gambler by profession. His nose is flat and out of both nostrils two fine growths of hair

MILTON HINDUS is Assistant Professor of Humanities at the College of the University of Chicago. He has lectured on modern literature at the New School and has published critical articles in the *Atlantic Monthly*, *Kenyon Review*, *Sewanee Review*, the *New Leader*, the *Chicago Jewish Forum* and other periodicals. He was born in New York City in 1916 and is a graduate of the College of the City of New York. Mr. Hindus is now at work on a volume to be called *Confessions of a Young Jew*; he writes: "I am at work just now on a chapter in which an effort is made to speak for a portion of the younger Jewish generation for whom none of the accredited groups speaking in the name of the Jews seem to speak: those who are neither Zionists nor assimilationists."

"luxuriate." His eyes are "tiny." When he talks he "covers" Gatsby with his "expressive nose." We first glimpse him in a mysterious conversation with Gatsby about a man named Katspaugh. When, at this point, the narrator, Nick, comes in and meets him, Wolfsheim mistakes him for somebody else whom Gatsby has mentioned and he immediately begins to talk of a business "gonnegtion." That "gonnegtion" runs like a theme through the whole book whenever Nick thinks of Wolfsheim.

But we are far from finished with that first episode. Gatsby tells "Meyer" that Nick is not the man he has had in mind. Wolfsheim apologizes and turns his attention to the "succulent" hash that arrives on the table. He eats with a "ferocious delicacy" while his eyes rove slowly around the whole room. He makes a complete arc, turning around "to inspect" the people behind him. Nick feels that had he, a stranger, not been present, Wolfsheim would have taken a quick glance "beneath our own table." Gatsby has to leave for a moment to make a telephone call, and Wolfsheim talks about him to Nick. He tells him that Gatsby is an "Oggsford man," and when he thinks that Nick has not grasped the significance of that, he repeats "Oggsford College in England. You know Oggsford College." Nick assures him that he's heard of it, but Wolfsheim is still doubtful and suspicious. He elaborates: "It's one of the most famous colleges in the world."

Nick asks him how long he's known Gatsby. Several years, is the answer. Wolfsheim "made the pleasure" of his acquaintance some time after the war. He could see at once that Gatsby was "a man of fine breeding." He pays Gatsby the ultimate compliment when he says: "There's the kind of

man you'd like to take home and introduce to your mother and sister."

Attention is shifted at this point to Wolfsheim's cuff buttons, which seem to Nick to be composed of some oddly familiar pieces of ivory. "Finest specimens of human molars," Meyer Wolfsheim tells him. After Gatsby comes back and Wolfsheim leaves, Nick asks about him. Gatsby says that he was the one who fixed the World Series in 1919. This "staggers" Nick. He had of course heard about that famous incident in American sporting history, but he had thought of it as a thing that had *happened*, "the end of some inevitable chain." It had never occurred to him that "*one man could start to play with the faith of fifty million people with the single-mindedness of a burglar blowing a safe*" (my italics). How did he happen to do it? asks Nick. He just happened to see the opportunity, Gatsby answers. Then why isn't he in jail? They can't get him, old sport. He's a smart man.

It is this scene which elicited the admiration of Edith Wharton in her congratulatory letter to Fitzgerald on the publication of his book: "The lunch with Hildeshiem [that was how the name Wolfsheim appeared in the original edition] and his every appearance afterwards make me augur still greater things." And in another part of the letter, she informed him that "this reader [is] happy to meet your *perfect Jew . . .*" (italics in the original). The word perfect here may indicate that Mrs. Wharton thought that this particular character was perfectly drawn, or else it may be an ironic reflection on the imperfection of this Jew's moral character, or it may mean that in Wolfsheim Fitzgerald caught the image of the *eternal Jew*. The emphasis disposes of the notion that the word was not carefully chosen, and it seems equally apparent that all three meanings are merged here. What I should rule out definitely is the possibility of the irony being friendly to the Jews—as it presumably might be. The writer's feeling is shown by the attachment of the word "perfect" to the word "Jew" instead of to the word "gambler" or "gangster" for instance.

WOLFSHEIM has a subordinate, and yet very important, role to play in the novel. He is the power behind the scenes in Gatsby's life. We have his own statement in the closing passages of the book that he not only "started" Gatsby, he "made him." There is no reason to doubt his word. A man who could play around with the faith of fifty million people could surely "make" one yokel into a clean-limbed, romantic American whose refinement he could use in some mysterious way. "I raised him up out of nothing, right out of the gutter. I saw right away he was a fine-appearing, gentlemanly young man, and when he told me he was an Oggsford I knew I could use him good."

That conversation takes place after Gatsby's sacrificial death. Nick refers to Wolfsheim as "the closest friend" of the dead man. The Wolfsheim theme keeps running like a leitmotiv underneath the entire story. The fall of Gatsby is foreshadowed when he suddenly fires all the servants at his great house in West Egg and replaces them with a gang of Wolfsheim's sisters and brothers, who "used to run a small hotel." Nick becomes aware of the change when he goes over to visit him and finds "an unfamiliar butler with a villainous face," who squints at him suspiciously from the door. The new butler is rude and says "sir" only with the greatest reluctance. From his grocery boy, Nick finds out that Gatsby's kitchen, since the advent of the new people, who aren't servants at all, "looked like a pigsty."

When Gatsby is murdered, and not a single friend or relative can be found to stay with his body, Nick remembers Wolfsheim and writes him a note asking him to come. He thinks the note is superfluous and Wolfsheim will start as soon as he reads the news, but instead the reply comes: "This has been one of the most terrible shocks of my life to me I hardly can believe it that it is true at all. Such a mad act as that man did should make us all think. I cannot come down now as I am tied up in some very important business and cannot get mixed up in this thing now. . . . Let me know about

his funeral etc. do not know his family at all."

It is at the moment of reading this letter from Wolfsheim that Nick (the neutral and barometric narrator) confesses to "a feeling of defiance, of scornful solidarity between Gatsby and me against them all." Nevertheless, he gives Wolfsheim one chance more to come to the funeral. He goes personally to call on him, only to be met with the same little cheap aphorisms that had been offered in the letter: "When a man gets killed I never like to get mixed up in it in any way. I keep out. When I was a young man it was different—if a friend of mine died, no matter how, I stuck with them to the end. You may think that's sentimental, but I mean it—to the bitter end. . . . Let us learn to show our friendship for a man when he is alive and not after he's dead. After that my own rule is to let everything alone."

FITZGERALD does not allow a single redeeming characteristic to his Jewish gambler, not even so much redemption as Shakespeare allows to Shylock in his dominantly villainous portrait. (It is correct to regard *The Merchant of Venice* as an anti-Semitic play in its original intention and effect, but since Shakespeare is an honest artist, we remember not only the balance induced by Shylock's famous "Hath not a Jew eyes" speech, but the perhaps more important fact that it is the Jew's daughter Jessica who is the twin heroine of the play with Portia, and atones for her evil and yet pathetic father.) Wolfsheim's relatives, his brothers and sisters and his wife, seem to be even less amiable than he—if that is possible. Fitzgerald's portrait of him is about as realistic and objective as Marlowe's of Barabas in *The Jew of Malta*. The modern Jew who "could start to play with the faith of fifty million people" is only a newer version of that Renaissance hero who loved "to poison wells" and walk abroad o' nights "to hear sick people groaning under walls."

I shall grant that Fitzgerald is writing a satire, and that some of the non-Jewish

characters are even harder hit than the Jew is. *The Great Gatsby* is nothing so simple as a piece of propaganda against the Jews. If it were, that would have been pointed out long ago. *But anti-Semitism is a component part of the novel.* It is not the mad anti-Semitism we find in Ezra Pound. Nor is it the kind of anti-Semitism we find in Dostoevski.

Fitzgerald's is the *fashionable anti-Semitism* of the 1920's, of the sort we find in T. S. Eliot at the same period.

It is now so many years since Eliot wrote of "the jew" (without capitals) who is the owner of his decayed house and who was "spawned in some estaminet of Antwerp, blistered in Brussels, patched and peeled in London," that this aspect of his work has been largely forgotten, and I have heard some of Eliot's Jewish admirers claim that he never was guilty of anti-Semitic utterances at all. I am sorry to disturb their comfortable ignorance, but I remember too well Bleistein with a cigar, "the jew" who is compared to a rat "underneath the piles"; I remember Sir Ferdinand Klein "who clipped the lion's wings, and flea'd his rump and pared his claws"; I remember "Rachel née Rabino-wich" in "Sweeney Among the Nightingales"; I remember the clear idea in *After Strange Gods*: ". . . reasons of race and religion combine to make any large number of freethinking Jews undesirable."

It is, I say, the modish anti-Semitism of the 20's, the kind that does not go so far as fascism and is horrified by the concentration camps that cruder and more plebeian hands have erected to implement these feelings. Wolfsheim corresponds to Bleistein. He is the rat underneath the piles. He uses Boobus Americanus Jay Gatsby as his front man, and when his tool is killed, he does not even have the decency to attend his funeral.

It will not do simply to say that there are Jews such as Mr. Wolfsheim, and that Fitzgerald is being objective in the portrayal of a certain type, without casting any aspersions upon other kinds of Jews. Wolfsheim is a character without any compen-

sations. His moral physiognomy is as distinctive as his physical one, and both stand out with the isolation of a caricature in *Der Stuermer*. If we compare Fitzgerald's satire with Proust's, I think that my meaning will become clearer. There is little difference between Fitzgerald's portrayal of Wolfsheim and Proust's portrayal of Bloch. Yet there is not the faintest trace of suspicion that Proust is anti-Semitic. You do not have to know that Proust himself was a half-Jew to realize that. There is evidence within the novel itself. For if Bloch is one of the most abhorrent characters within it, another Jew, Swann, is among the most admirable. And a fair, clear-cut presentation of the atmosphere surrounding the Dreyfus case is one of the most striking accomplishments of *Remembrance of Things Past*. Proust, in other words, does not leave Bloch hanging in mid-air as Fitzgerald leaves Wolfsheim; he provides a balance and a milieu that make of Bloch not the general representative of his people, but only an individual example. There is no objection to the portrayal of a Jew, however bad he is, provided that the reader cannot read into it the implication that this is a picture of *the Jew*.

IRONICALLY, another object of Fitzgerald's satire in *Gatsby* is the theory of "Aryan" superiority. Its mouthpiece is Tom Buchanan, who eventually causes Gatsby's death, and is possibly even more horrible than Wolfsheim. "Civilization's going to pieces," says Tom. "I've gotten to be a terrible pessimist about things. Have you read 'The Rise of The Colored Empires' by this man Goddard? . . . Well it's a fine book and everybody ought to read it. The idea is if we don't look out the white race will be—utterly submerged. It's all scientific stuff; it's been proved . . . It's up to us, who are the dominant race, to watch out or these other races will have control of things . . . The idea is that we're Nordics. I am, and you are, and you are, and—and we've produced all the things that go to make civilization—oh, science and art, and all that. Do you see?"

The comment of Nick, the observer (who

may be taken to stand for the author), is very cold upon Tom at this point. "There was something pathetic in his concentration . . . Something was making him nibble at the edge of stale ideas as if his sturdy physical egotism no longer nourished his peremptory heart."

This was written in the middle 20's. By the middle 30's, the "stale ideas" had been revived into an issue of world importance, and people like Mr. Wolfsheim (also those who weren't like him but happened to bear the generic name of Jew) were being transferred from the comic pages to concentration camps. Then the fashionable anti-Semites saw that this was really no joking matter, after all, and they stopped speaking of the Jews, while the mad anti-Semites like Pound began openly to show their hands. Hitler, as we know, was not triumphant, but a writer like Fitzgerald could not complain very much if an anti-Semitic parable were read into *The Great Gatsby*. He has supplied the materials.

THE anti-Semitism of the avant-garde of the 1920's derived from several sources, only some of which can be conveniently located. Two causes, locked together like Siamese twins, are: allegiance to tradition and hatred of the contemporary bourgeoisie.

There are several strands in the word *tradition*. There is a religious tradition, a literary tradition, a social tradition, and even a satirist's tradition, all aimed against the Jews. Granted that the literary tradition was stronger with the avant-garde than the religious one, still, the New Testament can be regarded as a drama in which the Jews play the role of villain. And the literary opportunity of presenting the Jew in his stock role could hardly be missed by men alive to a tradition consecrated by the usage at one time or another of some of the greatest masters of Western literature.

As for the social tradition, it is mixed in with the religious and literary one and yet separable from it. The distinctness of the Jews as a race may be denied by contemporary scientists, but it has had ample sup-

port in popular belief over the centuries. The satirist's tradition is also important. Much the best avant-garde productions of our time are either wholly or largely satiric in intention—certainly Eliot, Pound, and Fitzgerald are satirists. Now the satirist by temperament, because he has little affection for the living human beings around him, is disposed to look with favor upon those who are dead. Since things are about as bad as possible now, they must have been better in some remote and distant past—they could hardly have been worse. That is how he reasons, and it is why almost every satirist you can think of has been reactionary. He is a xenophobe, he hates all foreigners as Juvenal (who was incidentally a Jew-hater) did; he hates intellectuals as Aristophanes did (with his mockery of the "thoughtery" of Socrates in *The Clouds*); he hates science as Swift did (with his flying island of Laputa), or as Byron did (with his parody of "the patent age of new inventions" in *Don Juan*). Foreigners, intellectuals, scientists—if you are seeking one convenient, easily apprehended image to cover them all—what is better for your purpose than the Jew?

But in addition to appearing in his own right, the Jew also appears as the representative of the modern bourgeoisie. Open anti-Semitism is frowned upon in respectable society, not because of any excessive love for the Jews, but because it is feared as something that disturbs order and social concord.

The avant-garde writer, hating the modern social setup which deprived his educated superiority of its proper and accustomed esteem, asserted his hatred of the bourgeoisie by his hatred of the Jew. He flaunted the anti-Semitism concealed by the rest of polite society with the same satisfaction that a small boy feels in scrawling dirty words that everybody knows on public walls. He asserted his individualism by his anti-Semitism. It was one more instance of his unconventionality, and it demonstrated, in his own mind at least, his fidelity to the true culture of his country as distinguished from its "civilization" (in the pejorative Spengler-

ian sense of the word), represented by the monstrous and impersonal "ghetto-ridden" megalopolis.

In "Echoes of the Jazz Age," Fitzgerald writes: "... by 1928 Paris had grown suffocating. With each new shipment of Americans spewed up by the boom the quality fell off, until toward the end there was something sinister about the crazy boatloads. . . . I remember a fat Jewess, inlaid with diamonds, who sat behind us at the Russian ballet and said as the curtain rose, 'Thad's luffly, dey ought to baint a bicture of it.' This was low comedy, but it was evident that money and power were falling into the hands of people in comparison with whom the leader of a village Soviet would be a gold-mine of judgment and culture. There were citizens traveling in luxury in 1928 and 1929 who, in the distortion of their new condition, had the human value of Pekinese, bivalves, cretins, goats. . . ."

THE combination of these diverse causes and the artificiality and indirectness of some of them are what give to this anti-Semitism a certain unreality. *There is a literary quality about it*—as if the writers were not thinking of real, everyday, complicated, living Jews, but of an inherited image of them. Bleistein with a cigar, Sir Ferdinand Klein, Rachel née Rabinovitch, "free-thinking Jews," and Meyer Wolfsheim are abstractions in modern dress. The anti-Semitism is imitative rather than originally felt, as if the writer for the moment became his own ancestor. The image of the Jew has a *stark folk simplicity* about it that lies at the opposite pole from the refinement, qualification, and general subtlety pervading these writers' treatment of the rest of their material. The writer is doing penance at the family shrine before the tribal deities for his own sophistication—in the same spirit in which an agnostic suddenly decides to attend a religious service. We have an oppressive feeling that he knows better than what he writes. It seems incredible that a modern thinking man should become a

"slave" to passion—and such a passion. But he does it because *it is good for him*. When the intellect reaches a certain stage of development, there seems nowhere left for it to go except back into the primitive. It bathes and purges itself in popular emotion, from which it has been excluded so long. Perhaps modern anti-Semitism may be considered most fruitfully as the backwash of the romantic movement, that reaction against a preceding "age of reason" (an age, by the way, from which the liberation of modern Jewry dates). It was romanticism which originally brought into favor the music of Wagner, the philosophy of Schopenhauer, the folk ballad, and various other seemingly anti- or sub-intellectual forms.

In any case, it is a rare member of the avant-garde of the 20's who feels as does Stephen Dedalus in Joyce's *Ulysses* that "history is a nightmare" from which he is trying "to awaken." Many of them seem to think that it is a nightmare that ought to be encouraged. And they bring forward to it their own little "trifles for a massacre" (the actual title of Céline's first anti-Semitic book, which was so violent that André Gide in his review thought it a satire of genuine anti-Semitism). The number of instances of anti-Semitism could be multiplied, from authors whom I have not mentioned. Paul Morand, in his book *New York*, gives the following "joke" about the city, which for him apparently characterizes accurately its social relationships: "The Jews own it, the Irish run it, and the Negroes enjoy it." No mention is made of the fact that all three also do the work of the city, and that nationalities not named participate just as prominently in each of the functions which are named.

EVENTUALLY, under the impact of the newspaper headlines, the writers in whose work an anti-Semitic element was present broke up into two groups: those for whom anti-Semitism had been a plaything, and those for whom it had been something more. For the latter group, which included Pound, anti-Semitism became central, philosophical, obsessive; while in the case of the former

group, the decorative, fashionable, literary anti-Semitism, as its explosive social qualities were revealed, was completely and silently dropped.

Two explanations suggest themselves for the disappearance of a civilized prejudice. The person suffering from it may have acquired it thoughtlessly and may give it up the moment he fully realizes its implications and its injustice. Or he may choose to keep quiet about what may prove dangerous to him or to those ideas of his that are more important than this prejudice. The first explanation would involve a sincere and just repentance; the second would simply signify cowardly opportunism.

It may have been some such thought as this that was in the mind of Pound when he was captured by the American Army in Italy. He was quoted by *PM* as saying, "If a man won't stand up and fight for his ideas, there's something wrong either with his ideas or with him." Eliot, so far as I know, has never retracted anything in his work which might be interpreted as anti-Semitism; at a certain point, he simply dropped it. Six years after delivering the series of lectures at the University of Virginia, later gathered into the volume *After Strange Gods*, from which I have already quoted, Eliot delivered another series of lectures at Cambridge in 1939 which was published under the title *The Idea of A Christian Society*. No mention of Jews, either freethinkers or any other kind, is made in the latter book. They are simply omitted, but the implications of that omission are not contradictory to what he had said before. Recently, an article by Eliot on Pound appeared in *Poetry* magazine, and it dealt solely with Pound's contribution to poetry. It was intended to be taken as a roundabout defense of Pound, I suppose.

Now there were a number of Jewish literary men like Karl Schapiro who also came out against shooting Pound and it was perfectly proper for them to do so, since they could hardly be suspected of sharing his ideas. But it seemed evasive in Eliot's case to skirt about the political issues as completely as if they did not exist; after all, he

had been a close friend of Pound's for many years and had shared so many of his ideas—not only those concerning literature.

TO COME back after this long while to the more immediate subject of our deliberation—Fitzgerald was an artist rather than a philosopher, and he was therefore at his best when creating images, not when thinking about them. It is instructive to compare the richness and meaningfulness of his picture of American decay during the drinking 20's with the poverty of his interpretation of that picture. Occasionally, he stops long enough to allow the narrator Nick Carraway to comment, like a Greek chorus, on the action we have been watching. Almost the last comment Nick makes in the book, a few pages from the end, is most significant, if not illuminating:

"That's my Middle West. . . . I am a part of that, a little solemn with the feel of those long winters, a little complacent from growing up in the Carraway house in a city where dwellings are still called through decades by a family's name. I see now that this has been a story of the West after all—Tom and Gatsby, Daisy and Jordan and I, were all Westerners, and perhaps we possessed some deficiency in common which made us subtly unadaptable to Eastern life. . . . Even when the East excited me most, even when I was most keenly aware of its superiority to the bored, sprawling, swollen towns beyond the Ohio, with their interminable inquisitions, which spared only the children and the very old—even then it had always for me a quality of distortion. . . ."

It would take a long time to disentangle the threads of this attitude and categorize them, but in general the passage represents the basis of his feelings about Meyer Wolfshiem. The West in this passage represents the forces of tradition (a curious change from the days of the frontier when it stood for everything that was crude and uncultured), and the East stands for decay. In the West, "dwellings are still called through decades by a family's name," while in the East nobody is interested in anything about

a person except how much money he's got. People come to Gatsby's parties who not only know nothing about his family, but nothing about him; some of them have never seen him before, and some of them have never even been invited. Gatsby, the romantic baby turned into a clown by the surrounding waves of scepticism and nihilism, is so uprooted from tradition and a healthy connection with the people about him that he is reduced to considering a Wolfsheim his closest friend. Nevertheless, Gatsby remains the hero of the book precisely because to Fitzgerald he is a tragic victim. As a whole, *The Great Gatsby* is a kind of left-handed defense of romanticism and betrays Fitzgerald's ambivalent mixture of contempt, nostalgic admiration, and sympathy for this Don Quixote on Long Island (or, as he thought of naming the book at one time, "Trimalchio of West Egg").

A possible objection to this analysis, which it would be well to dispose of at this point, is that one is not justified in drawing inferences from the assumption that the narrator stands for the author. The matter is settled definitely by a sentence of Nick's early in the book: "Everyone suspects himself of at least one of the cardinal virtues, and this is mine: I am one of the few honest people that I have ever known." From that point on, it seems clear to me that Nick is a ventriloquist's dummy, whose neutrality is the author's, and whose emotions and philosophy are also those of the author.

As to the quality of this philosophy, the evidence justifies our applying to Fitzgerald the statement from Goethe's sympathetic obituary on Byron: "*sobald er reflektiert ist er ein Kind*." As soon as he begins to think he becomes a child. His cartoon of the Jew is the product of this thoughtlessness, though it surely is far from systematic anti-Semitism.

FITZGERALD's last word on the Jews remained only half spoken. *The Last Tycoon*, interrupted by the author's death, is the merest fragment, but it promised to be an interesting book and of an import somewhat different from that of *The Great Gatsby*.

The available portions of this last book show Fitzgerald playing with a number of ideas. The one that must concern us here is in the sharpest opposition to the Wolfsheim theme. The abstract concept of *the Jew* (perfect or imperfect) is split up by the concrete reality of *Jews*, good, bad, and indifferent. It is as if his Hollywood experience forced Fitzgerald, at least in this problem, to think a little harder and observe a little more closely. The producers Reinmund and Jacques La Borwitz are about as low on the moral scale as it is possible to go, but the hero, Monroe Stahr, is in a different class. Not that he is a good man, exactly—I'm not sure Fitzgerald ever had any positive ideas about virtue—but he belongs to the only type for which the author had any indulgence. He is a self-made, romantic millionaire, a dreamer. The more one thinks about him, the more he seems to resemble Jay Gatsby. With one important difference—he is a Jew. Where Wolfsheim had been no more than Gatsby's "best friend" and manipulator, here Wolfsheim and Gatsby merge into one. Certainly the resemblance is obvious between the Jew who had barely heard of "Oggsford College" and the Jew who has never heard of Aeschylus, Euripides, Aristophanes, Botticelli, or Spengler. But Wolfsheim's viciousness is gone. For Fitzgerald to admit that a Jew might be a romantic was equivalent to his ceasing to be an anti-Semite. This perhaps reinforces the suggestion that his anti-Semitism was a superficial, merely "fashionable" thing from the beginning.

Certainly Fitzgerald's attitude toward Stahr is ambivalent, but so was his attitude toward Gatsby, whom he regarded constantly with an inextricable mixture of love and contempt. In *The Last Tycoon*, if Fitzgerald cannot conceal a certain surprise when he observes that not all Jews are necessarily cheap and stingy, and if he sees Stahr himself as something less or more than human ("He has had everything in life except the privilege of giving himself unselfishly to another human being"), yet he can write of Stahr, with a kind of tenderness and humility, as the man who "saw a new way of measuring our jerky

hopes and graceful rogueries and awkward sorrows, and . . . came here from choice to be with us to the end." Stahr is surely no representative of the tradition of the Middle West, as Gatsby was, but by this time, perhaps, Fitzgerald had lost his sentimental nostalgia for that tradition (which, indeed, he had described rather vaguely and with significant reservations), and was able to see Stahr as the embodiment of a new cultural force that he could not entirely understand or wholeheartedly embrace, but that he was compelled to respect. As I have pointed out, the anti-Semitism of such a book as *The Great Gatsby* results in part from the desire to make life simple; the complicated interplay of conflicting attitudes in the portrait of Monroe Stahr is thus a sign of greater maturity and responsibility in the writer. In the words of the narrator of *The Last Tycoon*: "Writers aren't people exactly. Or if they're any good, they're a whole lot of people trying so hard to be one person."

I AM still troubled as to whether I have made the meaning of the term *fashionable anti-Semitism* sufficiently clear. The term stands for a habitual, customary, "harmless," unpolitical variety. It is best expressed by a brilliantly conceived scene in Joyce's *Ulysses* from which I have already quoted a phrase. Here Mr. Deasy appears as the fashionable anti-Semite, and Stephen Dedalus—the spiritual son, in the story, of the Jew Leopold Bloom—unsheathes one or two of his dagger definitions with which to pierce him very quietly (I have taken the liberty of using conventional quotation marks in place of Joyce's difficult system of dashes and indentations):

"'Mark my words, Mr. Dedalus,' [Deasy] said, 'England is in the hands of the jews. In all the highest places: her finance, her press. And they are the signs of a nation's decay. Wherever they gather they eat up the nation's vital strength. I have seen it coming these years. As sure as we are standing here the jew merchants are already at their work of destruction. Old England is dying. . . .'

"'A merchant,' Stephen said, 'is one who buys cheap and sells dear, Jew or Gentile, is he not?'"

"'They sinned against the light,' Mr. Deasy said gravely. 'And you can see the darkness in their eyes. And that is why they are wanderers on the earth to this day. . . .'"

"'Who has not?' Stephen said.

"'What do you mean?' Mr. Deasy asked. . . ."

"'History' Stephen said, 'is a nightmare from which I am trying to awaken.'"

That says everything as well as I could have wished to say it. Except one thing. To recognize such a variety as fashionable anti-Semitism, it is necessary to postulate that since the liberation from the ghetto (in some periods more strongly than in others) anti-Semitism has been as *omnipresent* as germs in the air about us. Even some Jews have been infected with it. When it appears as an element, even a minor one, in the work of a writer whom we are bound to admire by all the canons of art, it has several possible effects. In the case of the Gentile reader, it either escapes his notice, or it confirms a notion he has already had of the Jews, or it may be noticed by him and rejected, or it may plant the seed of a new suspicion within him. As for the Jewish

reader, he either ignores it as unimportant in the sum of the entire work, or else his aesthetic enjoyment even of a master like Shakespeare is soured by this drop of vitriol. The reaction of the first Jewish reader seems complacent and perhaps stupid, while that of the second is unfortunate. The horns of the dilemma are those which come out of a condition where a group exists semi-assimilated to an alien environment.

Perhaps the only escape and honest comfort lie in an attitude of scientific objectivity that recognizes fashionable anti-Semitism as no more and no less important than it actually is. By itself, it is a trifle (though a trifle not to be ignored), but in combination with other trifles, it may give rise somewhere along the line to an obsession that is no longer a trifle (Hitler's or Pound's) and this obsession—since madness is the most contagious of diseases—may, in the presence of certain other favoring economic and social circumstances, help prepare such a massacre as we have lately witnessed in Europe. Put in this tentative, halting way, this is not much of a conclusion, but it seems to be the only warranted one which we may make without losing our own objectivity and becoming (as is only too easy for a sensitive Jew in our time) ourselves obsessed.

RE-EDUCATING THE GERMANS

The Dilemma of Reconstruction

FRANZ L. NEUMANN

IT IS difficult to educate; it is more difficult to re-educate; it is well-nigh impossible to re-educate a foreign nation. To attempt to re-educate Germans by military government action is to attempt the impossible.

Now, by re-education we may mean *all* measures designed to change the character structure of the German people, or we may merely mean such measures as affect either the educational institutions (schools, universities, youth organizations), or the media of communication (press, theater, radio, movies, books). Primarily we will deal here with education in the narrower sense, although some attempt will be made to analyze the problem within the broader concept.

The impossibility of re-education by military government has been clearly recognized by the occupying powers, and the role given MG is accordingly much less ambitious. The Potsdam Declaration of July 1945 (III A 7) stated: "German education shall be so controlled as completely to eliminate Nazi and militarist doctrines and to make possible the

successful development of democratic ideas." The responsibility of the victorious powers was thus at once a negative one, the elimination of certain dangerous traits, and a positive one, the creation of a soil in which democratic ideas could grow.

This Potsdam Declaration statement is, however, as ambiguous as all those other provisions that commit the powers to the destruction of Nazism and militarism, and assistance in the creation of democracy. The ideological dispute over the meaning of such terms as "democracy" and "Nazism" has its roots in differing analyses of these conceptions.

For the Western powers, Nazism is essentially a political phenomenon that can be eradicated by the elimination of Nazis from power and by the introduction of democratic procedures. Democracy is conceived as a method of ascertaining the popular will in a free manner. To the Soviet Union, however, such definitions are totally unsatisfactory. Nazism for her is merely the political form of an economic and social system—the ultimate form of monopoly capitalism; consequently, the eradication of Nazism requires the destruction of that socio-economic system. As a corollary, democracy is defined as not merely a method of ascertaining the popular will, but as a society without exploitation, in which the equality of citizens is not confined to the legal and political spheres but is extended into the economic. For only in such a society, contends the Soviet Union, will democracy flourish and last.

The clash between these two different analyses determines the occupation policies of the powers in all respects and is most clearly reflected in their educational policies. In the Western zones, the Western point of view has indeed produced a state of consid-

THIS description of the conflicting machineries and ideologies involved in the re-education of the German people illuminates in microcosm the whole political problem of reconstructing Germany as a sound member of Western society. FRANZ L. NEUMANN was, until recently, chief of the German research section in the Department of State. He is best known for his monumental study of Nazi Germany, *Behemoth* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1942). Dr. Neumann was a lawyer and political scientist in pre-Hitler Germany. During the war he served with the OSS. He now holds a Guggenheim fellowship, and will be Visiting Professor in Public Law and Government at Columbia University during the coming year. *Germany Under Military Government*, a book edited by Dr. Neumann and Edward S. Mason, will shortly be published by Oxford.

erable freedom for the Germans; all the paraphernalia of democracy exist and the practices of political democracy are widely resorted to. But the ultimate outcome of this experiment is in doubt. The Weimar Republic points a warning that cannot be overlooked: that is, that political democracy may again give birth to a Nazism, perhaps not while the occupation lasts, but once the vigilance of the occupying powers has been relaxed.

Consequently, from the Soviet point of view, measures have to be taken that make a repetition of the Weimar experience impossible. The socio-economic system has to be changed at once in such a way that those forces that have traditionally supported imperialism and reaction can never again gain the ascendancy. In carrying out these measures (land reform, nationalization, and the educational reforms described below) the Russians have, however, resorted to the assistance of a state party, the Socialist Unity party (SED), with the danger that once that party achieves complete political control, freedom will not be established even when the socio-economic reforms are carried out.

One could formulate the clash between the conflicting ideologies in terms of a dilemma: *In the Western zones, there is the presence of freedom with the prospect of a rising neo-fascism; in the Soviet zone, there is the presence of repression with only a vague prospect of getting democracy.* The choice between these alternatives is obviously no choice—there is neither a greater nor a lesser evil, there are two evils, and to be relieved of such a dilemma requires concrete action by the four powers. But so far this has been almost totally absent.

THE Western powers have so far been presented as one unit. In all essential problems this is quite correct, yet an analysis of the differences in their occupation policies will help provide a better picture of their educational measures.

In the American zone the principle of indirect rule has been developed most successfully, if success is measured in terms of

administrative efficiency. American policy favors turning over to the German people, through their democratically elected representatives, as many tasks as possible without jeopardizing the basic principles of the United States Military Government. In consequence of this policy, all three *Länder* (states) in the American zone have their constitutions, their parliaments, their responsible governments, and their ministers of education, who are in almost full charge of educational policies. MG is thus confined to the *Länder* level. Lower MG echelons merely observe, analyze, and report to the *Länder* MG, but they no longer rule.

The second principle of the United States Military Government is the full transfer of all powers—whether formerly exercised by the Reich or by the *Länder*—to the separate *Länder*. There is in the American zone no zone-wide German authority that can be considered the keeper of the former powers of the Reich. The *Länderrat* (Council of States), composed of the minister presidents of the three *Länder*, is merely a drafting and coordinating body without legislative and executive powers. Its recommendations have to be enacted by the three *Länder* governments in order to become law. With the exception of a press law, the *Länderrat* has so far made no recommendations in educational and cultural matters.

The British Control Commission has adhered to the principle of direct rule much longer than the United States Military Government. In fact, not even now has the delegation of powers in the British zone gone as far as it has in the American *Länder*. Diets were elected only on April 20, 1947. In addition, former Reich functions have not been given to the separate *Länder* but have been preserved intact and established in the hands of the central zone authorities, formerly predominantly MG, now more under German control. Consequently, there is in the British zone a Zonal Educational Council under a former Prussian minister of education, Dr. Adolf Grimme; this council, however, possesses not legislative and executive powers but merely coordinating and advisory powers.

The French zone combines features of both the American and British zones. Like the American zone, it lacks a central organization to preserve the powers of the Reich and, consequently, to prevent the complete atomization of the zone into Länder. It does not know of a state council. It shares the slowness of the British zones in evolving a system of indirect rule. It differs from both other Western zones, however, in the supreme significance attached to cultural penetration and in the high caliber of French educational and cultural personnel.

Legally, the Soviet zone is not much different from the American. There are Länder with elected representatives and constitutions; in addition, as in the British zone, there is a German Central Administration for the whole zone, with a very extensive department of popular education under the direction of Paul Wandel, an SED leader. In theory, the Central Administration merely coordinates; in practice, however, it directs, simply by virtue of the fact that the Socialist Unity party holds the key positions in the Central Administration as well as in the Länder.

It is difficult to make the outsider realize the scope of the educational problem. Its physical aspect alone challenges the imagination of the planner. But this has been overcome, largely through the active assistance of military government. The moral and intellectual problem is, however, difficult and involved. It consists in creating conditions for democracy in a youth that has not known it, does not particularly want it, does not have teachers imbued with the spirit of democracy, and lives in an environment unpropitious to democracy.

THERE is, first and foremost, no traditional social and educational environment within which democracy can grow.

German education was and still is class education. Secondary school students (especially at the humanistic Gymnasium), university students, and consequently professors, came from the wealthier groups of society; they constituted in fact the reservoir

from which the traditional ruling groups drew their intellectual strength. Under the Weimar Republic, 34.1 per cent of all university students came from the upper classes, 59.2 per cent from the middle classes, and only 5.9 per cent from the lower classes, workers comprising only 3.2 per cent of all university students.*

This class composition is essentially unchanged in the present Western zones of occupation. In Heidelberg the composition of the student body, as to parentage, is now as follows:

Academicians and professionals	32 per cent
Employers	24 " "
Middle civil servants	17 " "
Higher civil servants	13 " "
Workers	6 " "
Artisans	5 " "
Farmers and lower civil servants	3 " "

In Marburg only 2.6 per cent, in Göttingen less than one per cent, come from workers' families. All these institutions are in the American zone, but there is no reason to believe that the situation is different in the other universities of the Western zones. The problem has, of course, not escaped the attention of the political groups or of the military government.

Military Government has no power to act here, or rather it has deprived itself of its power. The basic Military Government Regulation 8-102, in implementation of the over-all policy stated above, specifically states that "the reform of German education will be left to the Germans themselves, subject to encouragement, supervision, and control by MG," and 8-216: "The Germans must reorganize their own schools and create a new school system out of their own intellectual and spiritual resources." The three Länder in the American zone have each solved the problem differently. The constitutions of Bavaria (Article 128) and of Württemberg-Baden (Article 35) merely

* Statistics published by Svend Riemer in "Sozialer Aufstieg und Klassenschichtung," in *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, 1932, pp. 531-60, especially p. 533; and Franz Neumann, *Behemoth*, 1942, p. 399.

promise more scholarships, but retain essentially the old structure; only Hesse, dominated by the Social Democratic party, envisages (Article 59) free education on all levels, including the university, subject to the power of the government to charge fees for the wealthy students.

The composition of the student body is further adversely affected by the problem of admitting Nazis and former officers. German universities were hotbeds of Nazism under the Weimar Republic. This was true even, and especially, of the Bavarian universities. In Protestant Erlangen, in 1930, 19 out of 25 students were Nazis; and in Catholic Würzburg 40 per cent of the students voted for the Nazi party in 1930, while in the electoral district to which Würzburg belonged the Nazis polled only 12.1 per cent. The directive of the Allied Control Council of January 14, 1946 permits the enrollment of non-active Nazi party members, provided they do not exceed 10 per cent of the accepted students.

The admission of former army officers causes further deterioration of the student body. While in the Soviet zone active army officers are allegedly excluded and only reserve officers are permitted, the Western zones do not make any distinction. According to American statistics, the student body in the American zone includes 3.1 per cent active officers and 16 per cent reserve officers; in the French zone, 1.5 per cent active and 15 per cent reserve; in the British zone, 3.7 per cent active and 20.07 per cent reserve. The officer groups in the Weimar universities supplied much of the leadership for the Free Corps and for reactionary industrial and agricultural organizations.

Soviet policy is totally different. Special admission committees screen aspirants not only for membership in the Nazi party and for army status, but also for social origin, and care is taken to admit students without secondary education. But, as a consequence of the overwhelming influence of the SED in the screening committees, inquisitorial methods are applied to give preference to SED members. Already, the result in the

Soviet zone universities has been a destruction of the educational privileges of the wealthier classes. It is stated that 40 per cent of the student body now comes from the working classes, and special workers faculties (as in Leipzig) provide for the rapid training of the economists and lawyers so sorely needed by the state party.

IT HAS been the pride of the occupation powers that they have been able to reopen all German universities. (Only Giessen has not and will not be reopened, but its medical and agricultural schools are operating.) The French have even created a new university in Mainz. Yet the hasty reopening of the universities is now producing quite disagreeable consequences because the second de-Nazification wave tends to deprive universities of their teaching staffs.

De-Nazification proceeded in two stages. In the first stage, an attempt was made to remove members of the party and its affiliates. It proceeded on the basis of the famous *Fragebogen* (questionnaire), which compelled professors, under threat of punishment, to state their party affiliation. Relatively few professors were affected. But it soon became apparent that what was adequate for the ordinary Germans could not possibly be adequate for those to whom the education of the intellectual elite of Germany was entrusted. The authorities then began to scrutinize the publications of the professors and discovered that the majority of them had preached pro-Nazi, militarist, and anti-democratic doctrines—certainly no unexpected discovery for the initiated. A second wave of dismissals began, far more comprehensive than the first, a wave that actually threatened the continuation of many universities, especially of their law faculties. In Heidelberg, one of the most democratic of Germany's universities, 153 of 272 teachers were dismissed.

The mistake of hastily opening all universities, instead of opening a few with teaching personnel of unimpeachably democratic views, has now to be paid for.

The situation is aggravated by the caste

system in German universities, the rigid separation of the university career from all others. Rare are the cases in which outsiders (such as practicing lawyers and recognized writers) were given university professorships. Universities complain of the lack of a new generation and yet they look only into their own ranks, their own *Privatdozenten*, for teachers and stubbornly refuse to renew themselves from outside. Anyone who knows the Germany of today knows that there are a great number of capable young men and women—lawyers, literary and art critics, historians, economists—who could be induced to choose teaching as a career if the universities so desired.

MG has again prevented itself from intervening, having re-established the principle of the autonomy of the university (MG regulations 8-320 and 8-330 of May 27, 1946). After approval of each university's charter it will, according to MG law, operate under this charter, subject only to the continued control of MG. Autonomy is a cherished dogma of German universities. The original intention was to preserve academic freedom from interference by the governments that maintained them financially. Under the Weimar Republic, however, autonomy turned into a device to permit the sabotaging of the republic itself without fear of retaliation. Autonomy was abolished by the Nazis and re-introduced in a situation which is essentially that prevailing under the Weimar Republic.

The over-all picture of university life is thus disheartening. In the Western zones, the Weimar Republic has been substantially recreated; in the Soviet zone, the universities have been transformed into institutions for the creation of a corps of technicians and administrators serving the state party.

THE principles underlying German elementary and secondary school reform are again directly affected by the ideologies of the powers.

It has been American policy first and foremost to open all elementary schools as speedily as possible. Educational ardor and the

military necessity of keeping the children off the streets have indeed worked miracles. The principles underlying American policy may be summarized as follows: (1) The transfer of MG authority to the Germans; (2) severe de-Nazification of teaching staffs and elimination of Nazi and militaristic texts; (3) political neutrality of the schools.

The transfer of authority to the Germans has been completed (MG regulation 8-102; 8-216 of May 26, 1946) and the sole safeguard retained by MG, except for its supervision of de-Nazification, is the clause stating that no school system is to be permitted "which would make it difficult for any person to realize a development commensurate with his ability" (MG regulation 8-101).

De-Nazification of teachers in the American zone (and apparently in the Soviet zone) has been carried out speedily, energetically, and successfully by MG, and about 50 per cent of the teachers of elementary and secondary schools have been dismissed. How many of these have been reinstated by the Germans, on the basis of clearance by the *Spruchkammern* set up under the Law for the Liberation from Nazism, cannot be ascertained. In the British and French zones, de-Nazification has generally been laxer.

The transfer of the school system to the German authorities in the Western zones has not produced any basic changes because the major problem still remains: the old issue of secular versus confessional schools. True, there are a number of plans, such as those of the former Hesse Minister Schramm, the Bavarian Fendt, and Dr. Grimme. None of these, however, has gone beyond discussion. The major concern in the Western zones is the battle over the preservation or extension of church influence.

The school system of the Weimar Republic was based on a compromise (incorporated in Articles 143-149 of its constitution) between the secular Social Democratic party (joined by the Democratic party) and the clerical Catholic Center party. Three types of schools emerged from the compromise: the *Gemeinschaftsschule*, or community school (also called *Simultanschule*), comprising

members of both religious confessions; the *Bekenntnisschule*, or denominational school; and the secular school (*weltliche Schule*). These schools were to be established according to the wishes of the parents. Private confessional and private secular schools were also permitted. Detailed regulations were foreseen in the Weimar Constitution but never enacted; in fact, the school question remained so sore a point that even a cabinet composed exclusively of right-wing parties (1927) could not agree on it.

American policy, as expressed in the directive of October 17, 1945 and the MG directive of May 27, 1946 (8-112), has been to refrain from interference and to permit private schools. The sole important legislation is the directive of the Allied Control Council of November 19, 1945 to the effect that no school drawing on public funds could deprive children of their opportunity to receive religious education or compel them to receive it. In its early stage, however, MG actually gave preference to the *Gemeinschaftsschule* with its separate religious instruction simply because the scarcity of school accommodations worked against confessional (as well as against secular) schools. The situation is now reversed. The confessional school has triumphed in Bavaria, has held its own in Württemberg-Baden, and is prevalent in Hesse, where the Social Democrats, in order to get the consent of the Christian Democratic Union to the nationalization clause in the new constitution, agreed to freeze the school system until 1950.

Consequently, the situation resembles that under Weimar, with all the stakes in favor of the confessional schools—the more so since, on the basis of a bargain between Social Democrats and Christian Democrats, all education ministries in the American and British zones are held by Christian Democrats, who in return conceded to the Social Democrats all ministries of economics.

Only in the French among the Western zones has a military government school reform been enacted with definite favor shown to confessional schools, which seem the best vehicles for instilling a particularist or

strongly federalist spirit and thus promoting a pro-French cultural reorientation.

Needless to say, a far-reaching school reform has been enacted in the Soviet zone. The only school permitted is the public *Einheitsschule*. Private and denominational schools are prohibited. The *Einheitsschule* begins with eight years of secular foundation or primary school, in the seventh year of which the student chooses between a practical and a theoretical course. The practical course again divides into two years of vocational (*Berufsschule*) or two years of technical (*Fach*) school. The theoretical course leads to high school (*Oberschule*). Gifted students of the high or technical schools are admitted to the universities and the schools of technology.

At the same time the Soviet zone has abolished the difference in training of teachers. Pedagogical faculties at universities provide for the training of elementary school teachers, whereas in the Western zones they are still trained in special pedagogical schools of a definitely inferior status.

It is again the same divergences in philosophy and analysis between West and East that have determined the different school systems. The structure in the Soviet zone is definitely progressive. It fulfills the demands of progressive liberals and of the working classes, regardless of political affiliation. But the great danger is the use to which that system is put. For the Russians, education must be political, which in practice means the training of sycophants and functionaries for the state party.

The education in the West is "unpolitical," which, in view of the social and educational structure, means that it is actually or potentially reactionary.

AMONG the media of communication the press ranks first as an instrument in political education. The printed word still means more than the spoken one.

Newspapers are operating in all zones under different systems. But the results of the different systems are rather similar.

In the American zone about 40 news-

papers are licensed (with a combined circulation of over 4,000,000; in the British zone 44 papers have a circulation of over 4,500,000; in the French zone 28 papers have over 2,000,000 readers; in the Soviet zone 80 papers have over 8,000,000 readers). The papers in the American zone are "unpolitical": their editors have been selected exclusively from a journalistic point of view, regardless of party affiliation—but after an extremely careful screening. The political parties have no newspapers, although they are permitted to publish small bulletins.

So far, MG has refused to license newspapers run by political parties or party representatives, believing that an "objective" press is a superior medium for a democratic education. It is backed up in this view by a series of public opinion polls conducted by MG's Information Control Division. While such anti-political licensing was undoubtedly the right policy in the initial period of occupation, it now tends to become a serious obstacle to the reconstruction of political life.

The present licensing system has already given birth to a new *Generalanzeiger* type of paper—that is, an allegedly neutral provincial paper, which in the past, under the guise of being non-political, insidiously fought democracy. The licensees, under the present system, enjoy a perfect monopoly, and, being fully aware that they owe their business to MG, are of course more easily manipulated than party newspapers would be. Yet to deny political parties the right to publish newspapers is to deny the very basis of democratic political education. There is no political life that does not center around political parties.

Political neutrality (in education as well as in the press) and education for democracy are thus, in Germany, mutually exclusive terms. German political parties are no accidental phenomena; they fulfill—no matter what their leadership and quality—the basic political needs of society. There are bound to be, in view of the class character of German society, labor parties (one Communist, one Socialist); there will always be an outspokenly right-wing party (so far not admitted

in the American and Soviet zones), and there will always be a middle party trying to avoid and overcome the polarization of political forces between Right and Left. Political education consists in taking a stand for or against something with a political party. Meanwhile the public opinion polls simply express the desire of the bulk of the Germans to be left alone and to avoid taking a stand, the very attitude that a democratic political education should fight against.

This, of course, does not mean that the party press in the British and Soviet zones is superior to the non-political press in the American zone. They are equally bad. There are exceptions, the most outstanding being the *Tagesspiegel* (United States sector of Berlin), which, so far as I can see, is the only German newspaper that wages an unremitting fight against German smugness and unceasingly educates the Germans by a ruthless self-criticism. (This must be admitted in spite of the fact that the author is in almost complete disagreement with the positive policies advocated by the editor, Erik Reger.)

The most productive of all zones in papers and periodicals is the Soviet. This is because of the larger amounts of newsprint available there, but also because of the deliberate policy of the Soviet military administration. Here, of course, an intense politicalization of all the media of communication contrasts sharply with the political neutrality in the American zone. But, as can be expected, Soviet zone papers are overwhelmingly SED papers and thus merely stereotypes.

Less significance attaches to the role of the radio.

Since June 30, 1946, radio in the American zone has been turned over to Germans, supervised by small staffs of American control officers, though no German organization has yet been licensed. This is now being prepared. (The three major stations are at Frankfurt-on-the-Main, Stuttgart, and Munich; there are smaller ones at Nuremberg and Bremen, and a wired wireless in Berlin.) According to the German News Service (Dena), the Frankfurt Radio will be owned and operated by a corporation made up of

the universities, churches, trade unions, chambers of commerce, farmers' and youth organizations, political parties, the Hesse government, and the management of the station. No such transfer is apparently taking place in any of the other three zones. And in the Soviet zone, even receiving sets are licensed (Order No. 78, September 27, 1945, allegedly relaxed in the spring of 1946).

IT is a truism that there exists an intrinsic connection between education and the social, political, and economic structure of a country. This is clearly expressed in the American policy statement of August 1946 on the long-range aim of re-education: "Re-education of the German people can be effective only as it is an integral part of a comprehensive program for their rehabilitation." Yet there is always a danger that the present political-economic situation may defeat the long-range aim of education. Education aims at the future, but present social and political attitudes determine its present status and thus prevent basic changes in the future. Without an almost revolutionary act it is quite impossible to sever this vicious circle.

Present attitudes in Germany are far from encouraging. This is not only because of the Nazi system, it rather antedates it.

In university education Germany was, already under the Weimar Republic, on the way to losing her intellectual leadership, especially in the social and humanistic sciences. The German intellectuals were largely morally corrupt and their corruption clearly manifested itself under the Nazi regime. Their lack of resistance, their large degree of enthusiasm or at least of conformism, were the natural results of an utter lack of democratic attitudes both among teachers and students. Even those whom Anglo-Americans usually depict as the true representatives of the German democratic spirit reveal themselves, upon closer analysis, as basically conformists. (This is especially true of Karl Jaspers. His most characteristic book is his *Nietzsche* [Berlin and Leipzig, 1936]; see the reviews by K. Löwith and especially M.

Horkheimer in *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, 1937, pp. 405-414.) The German intelligentsia of today follows three key ideas: the first is "Western civilization," the second "the Occident" (*Abendland*), the third "anti-fascism." The first provides for synchronization with the Anglo-Americans; the second with the French; the third with the Russians.

Conformism to the domestic regime and domestic tendencies has been replaced by conformism to the occupying powers. Much of this is inevitable and merely expresses the disappearance of Germany as a political power. The extent itself of this conformism, however, is a daily surprise to anyone spending some time in Germany. The three terms mentioned in the previous paragraph are, so to speak, entrance tickets to the spheres of influence of the three major powers.

Those who reject such conformism simply become nationalists. Nationalism—or better, chauvinism—in Germany is again rampant. On closer observation, however, even nationalism is seen to be merely a form of conformism to the great powers. Today already, the major political parties announce their determination not to sign a future peace treaty if it should violate the basic needs of the German nation. The Left (especially Social Democracy) is as determined as the Right and, apparently, has not learned that playing with nationalism leads of necessity into reaction.

Simultaneously with the growth of nationalism, the attitude of Germans toward Nazism has changed. De-Nazification is no longer a moral problem; it is no longer felt to be morally detestable to deal with Nazis. They are merely irritants in the body politic, to be dealt with as fast as possible and with as much good grace as the situation permits (which is not much). De-Nazification today is simply an administrative procedure, no longer a problem of right and wrong.

INTENSE nationalism and the awareness of powerlessness have produced what many call nihilism. This is perhaps an inadequate word because nihilism has certain moral con-

notations. It is neither nihilism nor apathy but rather the ironic, and even sarcastic, attitude of the spectator who instinctively or consciously realizes that, although he is a mere spectator, everybody expects him to play a role—that of Christian, Democrat, or anti-fascist.

The clearest manifestation of the nihilistic state of mind is the growth of technocratic attitudes. These have already been fostered by and under Nazism. Minister Speer's organizational scheme was a deliberate attempt to replace traditional forms of business and state administration with a technocratic structure based entirely on engineers. The technocratic state of mind includes today the deliberate rejection of politics and parties, ironic and sarcastic attitudes toward Nazism, de-Nazification, democracy, anti-fascism, and concentration on finishing one's education as speedily as possible, and on a position, money, and consumer goods. In all elections to university student bodies, neutral lists prevailed. Well-meaning democratic professors and reactionary ones, too, encourage this apolitical attitude, the former for educational, the latter for political reasons.

Books and periodicals clearly reflect these trends. In the Soviet zone publications suffer from intellectual ossification. You open the first page of a magazine like the foremost cultural organ, *Der Aufbau*, or the foremost political organ, *Einheit*, and you know exactly what is going to follow. Publications in the Western zones suffer from osteomyelitis and, besides, are mostly devotional tracts.

There are, of course, a few exceptions, such as the writings of Werner Krauss (professor at Marburg University; his outstanding book is the novel *PLN*, published in 1946) and Eugen Kogon (*Der SS Staat*) and the earlier numbers of the periodical *Der Ruf*, published by former prisoners of war. There is also, especially in the Soviet zone, a considerable amount of first-rate literary criticism. But on the whole, the German intellectual world is dominated by a gerontocracy that so far has successfully excluded outsiders.

Much of this is, of course, due to the

isolation of German intellectual and political life. This isolation is practically unbroken. It has by no means been overcome by the educational officials of MG, who, on the one hand, do not represent the finest flower of American intellectual life, and, on the other, cannot, as parts of the machine of the occupying power, exert any influence on Germany's intellectual elite. The little that can be done by a foreign power should not be done by MG, but rather by America's outstanding scholars free from all controls by MG. American policy in this respect has been correspondingly formulated, but so far little has been carried out in this direction.

THE rest has to be done by the Germans. The revival of democracy presupposes, however, a unified Germany, no matter what her constitutional structure. In a Germany divided or excessively federalized, intellectual trends will either be intensely chauvinistic or intensely conformist, according to the interests of the big powers.

Democratic revival requires, secondly, an understanding among the great powers. Lack of understanding will make the Germans pawns in a struggle for their affections. Such competition is intensely corrupting. (This was one of the key themes in the Stuttgart speech of former Secretary Byrnes.)

But even if there should be a unified Germany, there is of course no guarantee that Germany will become a democratic nation. The risk exists that Germany may again become imperialist, that racism may triumph, that the Left may prove itself again incapable of stemming the tide and creating a political and social democracy. To enable the Left to achieve this, basic educational reforms are vital: the destruction of educational privileges, the elimination of the caste spirit in German universities, the secularization of education—all these are vital for achieving the long-range aims. But in order that these may be achieved, the present institutional arrangements must be changed by coordinated action of the occupants, along lines whose detailed description would go beyond the scope of this article.

THE WRITER AND THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

Case History of a "Culture-Maker"

MEYER LEVIN

FROM the observations of this magazine's editor on Jewish culture in America, I conclude that a large number of American Jews are now developed far enough in their consciousness as Americans to consider themselves as Jews. Jewish culture is coming to be considered a good thing, and apparently many people feel there should be more of it.

Since I have spent much of my life knowingly and sometimes unknowingly working on this theme, I am of course in accord with the conclusions of Elliot Cohen's article. At first I thought I might indulge in solemn theorizing on this subject, but as I began to spin out definitions in my mind, there were a great many intrusions. Most of them were in the nature of unpleasant memories of actual events involving frustration, waste, age, confusion in my efforts to work creatively toward contributing to American Jewish culture. Finally I decided that a plain rye-bread account of the career of a culture-maker might be most helpful.

I will indulge in definition-making to this extent: it is my point of view that culture

is the way of life of a people, and art is the formal expression of culture. In modern times, the art of writing is generally accepted as paramount in the crystallization of culture.

I AM a writer who from his beginnings has tried to express himself as an American Jew. The editor of COMMENTARY knows me from the beginning; it is significant that my first serious work was published in the *Menorah Journal*, a magazine of Jewish culture. Just after that, and fresh out of college, I went to Europe, where I was strongly influenced by Marek Szwarc, a Polish-Jewish artist, and from Europe I went to Palestine. There were no Zionists in my family. I went to Palestine more or less by instinct. In 1925, a young "born American" was an anomaly there.

In that post-collegiate year, I was trying to find my cultural roots. Some people are helped through history. I always considered that I had a very weak historical sense; schoolroom memory of teaching about the Greeks and Romans and the successions of kings in various European countries did not help me. I was able to find some reality in American history, and I discovered that France was a real place when Benjamin Franklin went there, and that the English were real people because we, the Americans, fought them; but there was no world before America. Many years later I found that when I linked up the Greeks as the people who tried to bring discus-throwing to the Jews of Jerusalem, they became real. In the end I discovered I had a good sense of history once I related the succession of kings in various European countries to the fate of the Jews in those countries, in those times. This may be a very narrow view, but the Jewish past was the key that worked for me.

MEYER LEVIN's autobiographical commentary on Elliot E. Cohen's article "Jewish Culture in America" (in last month's COMMENTARY) will be of special interest. Though comparatively young, he has been a practicing "culture-maker" in the Jewish field for more than two decades, and many critics consider his novel *The Old Bunch* probably the best novel on the life of Jews in America as yet written. In addition, he has written a number of other novels, as well as many essays and articles, edited a volume of Hasidic tales, and served as a war correspondent. He is at present in the United States, completing the cutting of a full-length film which he produced with Herbert Kline in Palestine. Mr. Levin was born in Chicago in 1905.

When I was a young would-be writer just back from Europe and Palestine, and working again as a newspaperman in Chicago, I was not yet very clear on such cultural mechanisms within myself. I had very quickly received the impact of Europe, especially the echoes of Polish culture which were fusing with the childhood memories of a culture that most immigrant Jews suppressed before their American children; and, together with that, I had felt the open, strenuous creative force of Palestine's new civilization.

I SET out to write my first novel. I knew then, already, that it should best be "American" and not "Jewish" but I could not help letting an encounter with anti-Semitism get into it. According to my contemporary Ben Hecht (in *A Guide for the Bedevilled*), anti-Semitism could not be found in Chicago in the 1920's, but it got itself into *Reporter*, which I wrote in 1926, in automatic response to my environment.

My second novel was also "American" because as a struggling young writer I had early discovered that the big-paying magazines were not interested in stories about Jews and that book publishers also were not excited about the sales prospects of such material. And like all writers I wanted to reach a big audience—not only for the money. So I wrote a novel about "American" youngsters by giving non-Jewish names to the characters I knew in my heart were Jewish kids, and by moving them from Chicago's west side to a south side area that later became famous as Farrell territory. The book was called *Frankie and Johnny*, and had little success.

Then I went back to Palestine to live in a kibbutz, with the plan of writing a novel about modern life in Palestine. Even though it would be about Jews, I thought the material would compel an audience: I thought it would at least awaken a strong response in young American Jewry, my own generation. I felt that the positive surge of the new life in Palestine could not help but awaken a response in them if I could succeed in delivering even a small part of its impact.

By this time I was trying in a half-conscious way to synthesize the west side of Chicago with the glimmerings of Hasidic life that I had received from Szwarc in Paris, and with the new-old culture of Palestine. And with the appearance of my Palestine novel, *Yehuda*, I expected to be launched as a Jewish writer of significance to my fellow Jews. Ludwig Lewisohn was then having considerable success, and I had the idea that if I could get started in this way, I could continue as a writer predominantly concerned with Jewish life.

Of course nothing of the sort happened. *Yehuda* received an excellent press, sold about 3,000 copies, and was ignored even among Zionist circles. Only some years later I learned that a fringe of Zionist youth had been affected by it; they came to Palestine and settled in Ain Hashofet and told me, when I was in Palestine on a later visit, that *Yehuda* had been their torah for kibbutz life. That was one of the few gratifying moments in my life as a writer.

But when *Yehuda* appeared and touched off no response in the American Jewish community, I was left rather suspended. The lack of a responsive audience was as frustrating as the dearth of royalties. I worked for a while at the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, fumbled around the theater in New York, gave marionette shows at Jewish community centers in an effort to make enough money to continue with my writing, only to find myself writing hack material in order to pay my marionette assistants.

I WAS haunted by the Hasidic tales I had read in Yiddish penny-editions in Szwarc's studio in Paris. I translated and rewrote them, and again there was no audience. The book set off a small ripple among the high-class rabbis who could give the homely Hasidic tales a fashionable folklore setting but the book did not penetrate to the public.

I had now worked over, for myself, the most important contributory material from outside the American Jewish world. I had gone to Palestine for one phase of it, and to the direct past, in Poland, for the other. I

was ready to try to integrate this in a big novel of American Jewish life which had been forming in my mind.

I went back to Chicago, worked three days a week as an editor of *Esquire*, and spent the rest of my time writing *The Old Bunch*.

For once, I had a pre-writing contract. But when I completed the first draft of the novel the publisher was disappointed. Why were all the characters Jews? Wouldn't it be more typically American if the street-corner bunch consisted of a few Irish, an Italian or two, and maybe a Greek?

I found another publisher. This time I felt I would surely get enough response from American Jews to enable me to go on in my development as a writer. And since *The Old Bunch* was a big thick book I expected to sell enough copies to enable me to drop my job and live at last as a writer.

All the response I got from the Jewish community was in the form of a few sermons preached against the novel. I was invited to lunch by a member of the Anti-Defamation League and asked why I wrote such stuff about my own people. I painstakingly made a list of all the characters in the book and asked him to tell me which he considered "a shame for the Jews." Among twenty main characters there was one that he didn't like.

The book was not a big seller, though several years later a drugstore edition appeared, giving people the idea that I was a rich, successful author.

In the meantime the publisher of *Esquire* claimed that he had had to accede to pressure to cease publishing "radical Jewish writers" and that I was one of the writers so named. However, he published the remainder of material he had bought from me. He signed it Patterson Murphy. I believe this was mostly under the pressure of his own sense of humor.

THERE was nothing left but Hollywood. In Hollywood one did not write about Jews. There seems to be a lifting of this taboo just now, with the purchase of *Gentleman's Agreement* and similar works, but in the

1930's this was a forbidden subject in popular magazines and in the films.

Such an occasional best-seller with a Jewish background does not mean that there is an established market for the writer with Jewish material. Such books or stories do not open the field: each creates an atmosphere of saturation. Only a week ago I had the publisher of a "Jewish" best-seller turn down a book which he admitted was excellent and highly attractive because, as he said, he had "done his Jewish book" for the time being. It is for this reason that one never feels secure in planning one's life as a writer about Jews. I suspect that there are many others like myself, who hesitate in their work when they think of the cold eye of the publisher awaiting them if they bring in another Jewish novel, and of the cold air from the unresponsive Jewish audience when, in spite of all this discouragement, the book is written and published.

The Yiddish writers did not have this unresponsiveness to contend with: David Pinski, Sholom Aleichem, Mendele could at least work with the assurance that they were wanted by their own people, that what they wrote was recognized as integral with the life of the community.

I can think of other writers in my category who have not written as much as they should have in their best years: Ludwig Lewisohn, Maurice Samuels, Daniel Fuchs, Irving Fineman—some continue to write, rather haltingly, and others stay in Hollywood. Perhaps they do not feel the problem as I feel it, but I suspect that much of my story is valid for other writers.

One trouble with being a Jewish writer in America is that the Jews won't accept you until the Gentiles have made a fuss about you. On the other hand you cannot quite emerge as an American writer if you write about Jews in the way that you might if you wrote about Armenians or Irish. *The Old Bunch*, for instance, was never understood by critics as a story about America, though a similar work about the Irish in Chicago was considered as directly in the tradition.

So I passed the next few years earning

a living by writing neat little stories for *Collier's* about people named Smithers and Wooster. Then I gave way to my Jewish radical impulses and wrote a novel about a steel strike; it was about Poles, Irish, Negroes, and Mexicans, but it had a Jew in it. A publisher suggested that this novel would be more "typically American" and more promotable if this character (a liberal doctor) were not a Jew. I did not make the change; *Citizens* did not sell very many copies.

During the war, I got a job as a war correspondent with an agency interested in Jews; my chief assignment was to write about Jews in battle, and surviving Jews in Europe. In the last weeks of the war, I chased up and down the entire European front, trying to reach each concentration camp as our armies approached it. I became saturated with the tales of the survivors, and just after the war found an opportunity to make a film about them, and about Palestine.

I went to Palestine to make the film with Herbert Kline, and this time felt quite consciously that what I wrote and helped film would bring into American Jewish culture material from Europe and Palestine that was vitally necessary to the psyche of every Jew.

I HAVE been back here for several months completing the film, and with it I brought a picture-book about Palestine. Now, in connection with the making of this book, I encountered a situation which repeated and epitomized to me the strangulatory experiences of my development as a creative worker in Jewish culture.

What I am going to say now may offend some people in various organizations. It may be injudicious on my part to do so, as I may have to come to them for assistance in cultural work in the future. But if I can open this situation to correction, their displeasure must be risked.

I needed some help in the publication of the picture-book on a scale that would enable it to reach a wide audience; this was a project that is legitimately the concern of more than one of these organizations, and

their spokesmen readily admitted it was the sort of thing they should be doing. They were one and all enthusiastic about the material and each sent me to the other for the help I needed. For two months I was made to feel like a *shnorrer*, then one after another of these promotion experts advised me that the only person who could really see the project through was "the big boss."

Now the "big boss" is a very, very busy man. It took me many weeks to get to see him. All the time, this book, whose publication all agreed was urgent, was on the shelf. Finally the "big boss" gave me a few moments of his valuable time, and informed me blandly that of course the various people who had sent me to him had been under a misconception, and I should really go back and see so-and-so, on such-and-such a committee.

Perhaps all of this sounds like a very special complaint. Unfortunately, it is too typical. The community is somehow separated from us by its little bosses and its big bosses, some of whom are specifically hired to stimulate the development of Jewish cultural efforts, especially between Palestine and America. Even when an artist has managed to do his work, and is eager to deliver it for use, he is made to feel that he is a creature without dignity and with no place in the community. A sculptor cannot make monuments forever for his own back yard: he must have a community that will raise them up; and our plight in the other arts, while not as visibly demonstrable, is similar.

I found, among some organizations that deal with these cultural matters, a lack of aggressive imagination, and a good deal of professionalized evasiveness. More than once, I felt that it was no small wonder that so many creative writers, artists, and actors, when they finally experienced the urge to become active in the Jewish cause, were drawn to the extremist groups rather than to the central bodies. For there are people in the central bodies who make one feel unwanted and unwelcome.

With patience, of course, one sometimes gets through to a more understanding ele

ment. But a great deal gets choked on the way.

There is, for instance, a highly developed music in Palestine. Out of the great sums spent on speech-making, repetitive arguments, and full-page advertisements for the Palestine cause, it would take only a very little money to bring that music here, and we could have it on the air and on records, and it would make a highly positive contribution both to our cause and to our culture. But for this there is no budget.

WHAT do I want with all this? I come to the same point Elliot Cohen's article reached: that Jewish culture consciously assimilated is a good thing, but before we can assimilate it, we must first have it put into form, and for this, practical help is needed. I do not pretend to hope that our situation will change very quickly, and that the big Jewish temples will suddenly feature Jewish artists and Palestinian dancers and singers instead of Coulston Leigh lecturers in their halls. But discussion of this sort does add to understanding.

To prevent a few false conclusions: I do

not feel that my own work has been lost. I do not feel that every "American of Jewish birth" who is creative must be exclusively or even partially "Jewishly" creative; I do not believe the material of Jewish life is every Jew's only material for expression, nor do I feel that I am confined to Jewish material.

I believe that the American Jew should enrich himself from his Jewish as well as from his American sources. I believe he must draw from the sources of our life in the past, and in Palestine, as well as from the life around him. If he is creative, I believe he will do his best work when he has attained his cultural balance as a Jew. I feel that I have stumbled around for a long time in doing this, and that a sad lot of my creative time has been expended in doing peripheral jobs and money jobs which I might have been spared in a better developed community. I feel that I can now write rather freely as a Jew and as an American, or let us say as a person who knows something of what he is made of, and I hope the discussions here on Jewish culture and culture-makers will save a little time and a little grief for others and for myself in the future.

FROM THE SECRET COUNCIL OF THE CONQUERED

URI ZVI GRUENBERG

We have reached might with our giving.
We have reached the sky with our planes.
But we have brought no platter of wonders
Down to the bottom of our living.

The Mothers have sung about it and sung:
There will come a golden kid one of these
hours,
Come laden with treasures and wonderful
dowers;
The kid never came, and is never coming.
There's a pair of black horses one of these
hours.

URI ZVI GRUENBERG, one of the most powerful and original of the younger Palestinian poets, is considered the poet of the Revisionist movement there. The present poem is translated from the Hebrew by JACOB SLOAN.

ECUADOR: EIGHT YEARS ON ARARAT

The Story of a South American Haven

BENNO WEISER

THE family of Ecuadorians who in 1938 invited me to spend Christmas with them were surprised when I rose to leave after dinner instead of waiting to go with them to the *misa de gallo* (Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve).

"I suppose you know I am a Jew," I explained.

"But what does that matter?" my host replied. "Jew or Christian, we are all Catholics, aren't we?"

IN 1938 the rather melancholy inhabitants of Quito—that paradoxical place, which, although on the Equator, is surrounded by snowy peaks—knew very little about Jews. Very few Jews had found their way into this hidden spot in the Andes, 9,348 feet above sea-level, the second-highest capital in the world. Now and again, perhaps, there had been a Jewish engineer, chemist, or peddler. In Quito *Judio* didn't mean Jew. A *Judio* was a man who charged exorbitant interest or who sold merchandise at very high profit. The term referred to neither a nation, a race, nor a religion. The papers carried stories about the Jew-baiting in Germany, but those Jews were as distant and abstract as Hindus or Malays.

Then came the Anschluss, Munich, and November 10, 1938. It was the Flood. As the water rose, thousands began to flee. About three thousand managed to reach Ararat. This Ararat lay between two chains of the Andes and was called Pichincha. At its

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QUITO

base lay an idyllic town with colonial lanes, Indian carriers, fierce noonday suns, dank nights: San Francisco de Quito.

They came in dribbles. Each wave tossed a few ashore. They were not all business men, as was sometimes the case in other South American countries. They were doctors and engineers, painters and musicians, journalists and technicians, industrialists and chemists, university professors, students, actors, artisans, cooks. Most of them spoke German, but some spoke Czech, others Hungarian, Polish, Rumanian, Italian. Very few knew Yiddish. These newcomers took in the twisted lanes, the cobblestones, the bare-footed *Indios*, the dusty *ponchos*, and although they didn't feel homesick their minds returned to the past. They couldn't help making comparisons. Every other word was "over there" or "in Europe."

There have never been many *gringos* in Ecuador. They have always been treated with respect, no matter what their nationality, and addressed as "Mister." Xenophobia did not exist. An Ecuadorian would rather have rented his house to a *gringo* for three hundred sucres than to a compatriot for four hundred. To be an *extranjero* was like a guarantee of punctuality, cleanliness, and reliability. The Germans, Austrians, and Czechs who now arrived found their way made smooth by the other outlanders who had preceded them under other circumstances.

"You must be a friend of Mr. Giese," the *Quiteños* would say naively to the German-Jewish refugee. Mr. Giese was also an *aleman*. That he was a Nazi was a distinction that Senor Sanchez or Gonzales didn't make. After all, Ecuador too had its *liberales* and *conservadores*. And if an Ecuadorian greeted a refugee with a "Heil Hitler"

it was without any malice. He was just showing that he knew a few words of German.

Strangely enough, it wasn't the Germans who first made the Ecuadorians aware of the distinction. The German Ambassador, Dr. Klee, made it plain that the Jews who called on him about their passports were simply German citizens to him and could always count on his assistance. It was the Jewish immigrants themselves who stressed the difference. When war broke out the Jews in Ecuador turned militant, and the anti-Semitism of the German population came in answer to that anti-Nazi offensive.

IN THE little town of Quito with its 160,000 inhabitants, only about half of whom wore European clothing, a group of 2,500 foreigners made a substantial minority. The town was soon full of "Misters"—who lost some of their prestige in consequence. Moreover, many of them followed undignified occupations. They went from house to house selling candy for cash, and suits on credit. Or they hired themselves out as domestic couples. Evidently there was something wrong with these "Misters," and it wasn't long before the natives began to associate the adjective *misterioso* with "Mister"

But the "mysterious" foreigners were undoubtedly industrious. Their Jewish business had a revolutionary effect on sleepy Quito, where the number of working days is reduced to about 180 by the numerous festivals and holidays. Overnight there sprang up countless small businesses, "factories" located in garages and consisting of from one to five workmen besides the proprietor. Many of these enterprises failed because those who ran them were ignorant of local conditions or because the market was limited. Many of the immigrants were unable to readjust. There were cases of voluntary, almost masochistic degradation. Some Europeans couldn't reconcile themselves to the thought of ending their lives in Ecuador. They thought of that small, undeveloped country as a kind of inexpen-

sive stopping-off place. "Over there" they had known refinements and expensive living, but here they improvised furniture out of crates, pinched every penny, denied themselves even a bit of butter, although they had handsome bank accounts. They would subtract from their lives the years spent in Ecuador; many didn't even unpack their trunks. I remember one pathological case: a wealthy man who peddled from house to house rather than withdraw from his capital the thirty dollars a month he and his wife required. In this way many of them exacerbated their feelings of alienation. They made comparisons between the new life and the old, and yet they made no effort to make the new life comfortable. Instead of contrasting freedom and persecution, they contrasted dirt and cleanliness, the vermin-ridden Indio and the neat European. But younger, more intelligent men, applauded the Viennese doctor who said: "I would rather live among vermin than among beasts."

HAPPILY, the attitude of the majority was positive. They acknowledged the mercy of God, who had brought them to this island of peace in the midst of a cataclysm that ravaged the world. For it was an island of peace, despite the usual local revolutions. For these people there existed not only yesterday and tomorrow, but also today.

Within a very short time a Jewish community life, unique in South America, sprang up in Quito. Of the 3000 Jews who between 1940 and 1945 constituted the Jewish contingent in Ecuador, over 95 per cent were refugees from Hitler's Europe. While in most of the other Latin-American countries there was a marked separation between "old" and "new" immigration, the Ecuadorian Jews stressed homogeneity from the start. Almost throughout South America, the Jews divide themselves into Ashkenazim, Sephardim, and German Jews. In Ecuador the middle group hardly existed. East and West were joined by many intermediate stages, since many of the German-speaking Jews came from Poland or Rumania, even

though they had made their homes in Germany or Austria. Since almost everyone understood German, that became the common language. Spanish was used only in contact with the Ecuadorians.

It was not long before the Jews in Ecuador, 80 per cent of whom lived in Quito, had an organization handling cultural and religious affairs, relief, and community life. They established a court of arbitration, a Chevra Kadisha, a women's league, a young people's organization, and an athletic group. A cooperative bank was founded, supported by the Joint Distribution Committee. They built a theater, a cemetery, a kosher restaurant. In addition they had two newspapers, a fortnightly in German and a weekly in Spanish. The large hall of the "Asociación de Beneficencia Israelita" was rented ninety-three evenings a year for Jewish cultural events. While in other Latin American countries there was a strong tendency toward conversion, in Ecuador, on the contrary, there was a tendency for converted Jews to return to the faith, attracted by the high level of Jewish community life.

Painters and musicians, doctors and scientists, architects and journalists helped to give prestige to this immigration. The pride which the most prominent members of the community took in their Jewishness inspired pride in the others and they felt no need to conceal the fact that they were Jews. Up to the beginning of 1942 Jewish community life in Ecuador was harmonious and almost exemplary.

Then the effects of the war began to be felt. Overnight, all those distinctions that had hitherto been insignificant—nationality, mother-tongue, and so on—assumed paramount importance. Following the lead of the United States, South America began to distinguish between friendly and unfriendly aliens. Suddenly the Czech Jews belonged to the Allies and the German Jews to the Axis. A Polish Jew was an ally of the United States, an Austrian Jew occupied an intermediate position and tried to shake off the German nationality imposed on him by his passport. New organizations mush-

roomed: Free Germans, Free Austrians, Free Czechs, Free Poles, Free Italians. These groups were further divided by political and ideological dissension, with the result that there were soon two German and two Austrian organizations, a situation that might have been normal in a larger community but seemed ridiculous in this microcosm. The Czechs opened their own restaurant, the Poles a club, the Germans a *Heim*, the Austrians a *café*. There were benefit balls in national costume, concerts of Czech music or Viennese songs. The Czechs and Poles no longer attended German-language events, even though many of them knew no Czech or Polish. Everyone talked politics. The Czech Jews quarreled with the Austrian monarchists. German Jews of Communist leanings blasted their political opponents, who were promptly labeled fascists. A Polish Jew in a fit of patriotism tore a picture of Stalin from the wall of the Polish club, whereupon the leftist Poles began boycotting the club. Czech, German, and Austrian monthly reviews came into being. There were polemics from the stage, the lecture hall, in the columns of newspapers. Mount Ararat had turned into the tower of Babel. The Jewish organizations were no longer social nuclei. People wore national emblems in their buttonholes and thought of themselves as Austrians and Poles first and Jews second.

IN DUE course anti-Semitism appeared in Ecuador. The country was beginning to suffer from the war. Imports ceased, prices rose 500 per cent or more. Although this was a universal phenomenon, to the natives of the valley in the Andes there was a simple explanation: the Jews could afford any rent, the Jewish women didn't bargain for food (an old accusation in reverse). And besides, there were so many of them! To the *Quiteño*, who ran into them everywhere, there seemed to be thousands. The buses, which couldn't be augmented because of the war, grew more and more crowded. Many Ecuadorians, grown accustomed to the restaurants established by the *gringos*, were

now unable to make ends meet. The expertly arranged shopwindows of the Jewish stores tempted women to buy things they had never bought before. European energy had forced a new rhythm on the lazy Ecuadorian, brought up on the principle that *mañana es otro día*. He didn't like it. He felt second-rate in his own country. The term *Judío* began to mean foreigner. Anyone with blond hair and blue eyes was a *Judío*. The word began to replace the traditional *gringo*. Everyone was a *Judío*: Americans, German Nazis, Dutchmen, and even Jews.

Then one day the newspapers carried stories of the wholesale extermination of Jews in Europe. The average Ecuadorian, though by no means a pro-Nazi, tended to think of Germany as a proletarian nation struggling against the wealthy United States and the vast British Empire. When newsreels were shown in the theater, the orchestra, where the upper classes sat, would applaud the Allies, while the gallery hailed Hitler and his troops. Surely an attractive people like the Germans wouldn't kill off millions of *Judíos* without a sound reason. And wasn't it rather strange that, while these things were being done in Europe, here in Ecuador the *Judíos* were allowed to open stores, compete with the natives, and grow prosperous? It just showed once again how little the *gobierno* was worth.

Ecuadorians are not violent people. Their change of mood had no practical effect. Yet it increased the traditional Jewish tendency toward the ghetto. And in turn, this tendency increased the Ecuadorian's feeling that the Jew looked down on him. Mixed marriages were very rare; the contrasts were too strongly marked. A few cases occurred in the lower classes.

The term "Mister" had fallen out of use. *Judío* sometimes took its place, and even if it was not meant contemptuously "Mister" had sounded better.

BUT the majority of the intelligentsia were definitely friendly toward the Jews. Hardly a single Ecuadorian of rank and dis-

tinction failed to support the Pro-Palestine Committee. Some of the best writers of the country, including the ex-Foreign Minister Dr. Benjamín Carrión, Dr. Pío Jamarillo Alvarado, José Rafael Bustamante and his brilliant wife, Hipatia Cárdenas de Bustamante, endorsed the Zionist movement enthusiastically. Other notable sponsors were Dr. Luis Bossano, chairman of the Law School, and such leading journalists as Dr. Jaime Barrera, Dr. Miguel Albornoz, Augusto Arias, Carlos Mantilla, and Humberto Vacas. Oswaldo Guyasamin, Diógenes Paredes, Pedro León, and many other Ecuadorian artists who had been closely affiliated with artists from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Rumania, lent their aid; one of them, Luis Mideros, drew the figure of a woman symbolizing re-emergent Zion. The conservatory, where some of the Jewish musicians taught, performed Handel's *Judas Macabaeus*. On the death of Stefan Zweig the University arranged a memorial program at which Jewish and non-Jewish speakers discussed Judaism in its political and cultural aspects. Almost all daily papers invited European editors to comment on international affairs, and the men chosen were Jews without exception. In the Catholic seminary, rector León Scamps and Ponce Rivadeneiren gave talks on Judaism and Zionism.

During the war years the Jewish community was also on excellent terms with the various allied embassies. In view of the present situation there is a certain irony in the fact that the British Ambassador, Leslie Charles Hughes-Hallett, and his wife organized a Hanukah ball for Jews and Gentiles at the Embassy, the proceeds of which went to Jewish charitable institutions.

Government circles were divided in their attitude. But it should be said that Ecuador was one of the few countries that never barred Jewish immigration. (It is true that in 1937 the dictator of the day, Alberto Enriquez, decreed that all Jews then living in the country—barely 300—were to leave Ecuador at once. But he rapidly changed his mind in the face of diplomatic representations and a cable from his beloved Berta Sin-

german, the famous Argentine *chanteuse*. And this happened during the "prehistoric" era of Ecuadorian Jewry.) From time to time right-wing circles demanded an investigation, because many of the immigrants who had entered the country as farmers or industrialists became engaged in retail trade. No such investigation ever materialized. President Arroyo del Rio, ousted in 1944, consulted only Jewish doctors and dentists, who practiced without official permission. When President José Maria Velasco Ibarra returned after long exile, he said at a press conference: "It hurts me to find on returning to my own country that a prejudice has grown up against the Jews. To the ancient Jews we owe our religion, and to those of modern times our most important scientific discoveries. As long as I am President the Jews will enjoy complete liberty and equality in Ecuador." Some years earlier Dr. Velasco Ibarra, then a renowned university professor, had published a book on international law in which he dealt exhaustively with Zionism and reproached England for not keeping her promises. The present chancellor, Dr. Trujillo, is likewise a friend of the Jews. (In South America, where political ideas are rather muddled, this attitude is not necessarily an index of the government's political bias. Today Ecuador is closely leagued with Peronist Argentina, has refused to recall its ambassador from Franco Spain, and employs in the office of the President a young Nazi woman who was formerly in the employ of the German embassy and spent the war years in Germany. Ecuador also welcomes back with open arms the Germans who were deported during the war years.)

THE young generation of immigrants has grown up without illusions. Their memories of Europe are too distant and hazy, and the contrast between them and their Ecuadorian fellow students, on the other hand, is too great. They are no longer Europeans and not yet Latin Americans. There is nothing for them to look up to. Small-town life robs the adults of glamor and reveals them in all their weakness and vacillation. The parents

have watched with concern as their young people absorb only the negative features of both old and new environments. These youngsters smoke at fourteen, play cards at sixteen, and by the time they are eighteen life no longer holds any secrets for them. The flight from Europe has brought about a devaluation of the intellectuals, for the artisans, merchants, and industrialists find adjustment easier than do lawyers and college graduates. In the beginning the parents welcomed this trend, since they were unwilling to see their children grow into vague idealists. But as standards of living increased, the old ambition to let the children study and "be something" reappeared. Parents began to cast longing glances toward countries with better schools and universities. If they were unwilling to end their lives in Ecuador, they were just as unwilling that their children should live their lives there.

Then there were the constant political shifts: revolutions, short-lived dictatorships. The country, economically poor, though potentially rich, barely seemed to move forward. It was relatively easy to earn one's living, but any considerable saving was out of the question.

A few years of living at this altitude showed its effects. Not specifically physical effects, because the organism easily adapts itself to the climate—spoken of as "eternal spring" though it resembles more nearly an eternal fall—but the altitude, the monotony of the seasons, dry and rainy, together with the small-town complex, the inevitable gossip, began to get on everybody's nerves. People became hypersensitive and sometimes malicious. As the end of the war drew nearer, exile was harder to bear. It was borne in upon them that this was only a stopping-place, not a new home. In the bad days of the war, to be alive was all that mattered. But with the approach of victory spirits revived and so did ambitions and pretensions. Most felt an urge to start out again. The only question was where to go.

They had left Germany, Austria, or Czechoslovakia knowing that it was to be forever. They had left full of hatred and bit-

terness. But the artificial romanticism of the national organizations filled them again with nostalgia. Against all logic and experience they began to idealize the very people from whom they had fled only yesterday. Many began to tell themselves that everyone alike had been violated, that the Germans and Austrians were good at heart and not really anti-Semitic. They longed to speak their own language once more, to struggle no longer with foreign vocabulary and grammar. They began observing national holidays, getting drunk and singing old songs. The Czechs even made plans for a collective repatriation and thought of chartering a ship.

THEN peace came, with all manner of disappointments and disillusionments. The sentimental neo-patriotism dissolved into thin air. For a while no one thought of leaving a country where life was carefree, even if not ideal. Where, after all, was the place where one could be really happy? But the new restlessness had already struck root too deeply. The craving for culture was too strong; people who had never attended concerts or the opera in Europe suddenly fancied that they could not live without these things. They knew perfectly well that Europe was dead as far as they were concerned. All that they associated with Europe had emigrated, concentrating mostly in New York. They read in *Aufbau* about their favorite singers, poets, actors, and musicians. Their trunks were packed; it was only a matter of changing their destination. The compass pointed to the United States.

For many this was an easy matter. Ecuadorian consulates have never been as overworked as those in Europe. The well-dressed, well-fed European who applied for a visa in South America was more welcome to the authorities than the ragged, half-starved inmate of the German concentration camp. A whole populace began to move. The mass migration disturbed the ones who had not yet thought of leaving. With each departure the group felt more isolated and lonely.

Yet those who left did not find it easy. At the moment of leaving, the green landscape

and the picturesque town with its fringe of mountains took on a new loveliness. Eight years in the Andes had made different beings of these people. They had grown slower, they were used to the philosophy of *mañana*, and now they were apprehensive of the hectic life and the struggle for existence that awaited them in the United States. They suddenly discovered that it had been easier to say goodbye to Vienna, Prague, or Berlin. They felt a belated sense of gratitude toward a country that had treated them well and decently. And as the plane took off they realized that they were saying not "Leb' wohl," but "Adiós."

One dove departed, then several, then whole flocks. The Flood had subsided. Somewhat chagrined, the government refused to naturalize any more of these immigrants, who as soon as they became citizens wanted to leave the country. In 1946 the Jewish community of Ecuador lost one-fourth of its members. At this rate it will be non-existent in another three years. That would indeed be a pity, since it is the most attractive and best organized in all South America.

This peculiar phenomenon of a migration without compulsion is being partly offset by a new influx of Europeans. The country remains open as always. The President, Dr. Velasco Ibarra, who himself had had his fill of exile, and who made many Jewish friends in Argentina, Chile, and other countries, stands by his promise. New Jewish immigrants are constantly entering the country from Europe or from Shanghai. Some come only to wait for their visas to the United States. But others, after a life of torment and privation in Europe, are planning to build a new existence. These people have fewer pretensions than those who were fortunate enough to leave Europe in time and who spent the critical years in security. The future Jewish community in Ecuador will consist of people now in Rumania, Hungary, Italy, and the countries of Western and Central Europe rather than of those now in Ecuador. The first *Aliya* was unable to strike root completely. Perhaps the second will succeed. . . .

CREATING A MODERN SYNAGOGUE STYLE

A Discussion

WITH many Jewish communities planning new synagogues or embarking upon building projects deferred by the war, the problem of Jewish religious architecture has become one of wide practical concern. Its discussion, in addition, illuminates the general problem of creating Jewish cultural forms indigenous to the American scene.

Three of the contributions to this informal symposium on the problem of synagogue architecture in this time and place were stimulated by Rachel Wischnitzer-Bernstein's provocative article on that subject in our March issue. Dr. Landsberger's essay was prepared originally for the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

FRANZ LANDSBERGER was born in Germany, where he received his doctorate in art history and archeology. From 1935 to 1939 he was director of the Jewish Museum in Berlin. He came to this country in the fall of 1939 to lecture on Jewish art at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. Since 1945 he has been visiting consultant in synagogue architecture for the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. His books include *A History of Jewish Art* (Cincinnati, 1945) and *Rembrandt, the Jews and the Bible* (Philadelphia, 1945).

Expressive of America

FRANZ LANDSBERGER

THE synagogue, as is well known, was not the earliest abode of Jewish worship. It was preceded by the Tent of Meeting in the wilderness and later by the Temple. In the description of the dedication of Solomon's Temple, the Bible put these words into the mouth of the King: "I have surely built Thee a house of habitation, a place for Thee to dwell in for ever." These words precisely define the significance of the Temple in Jerusalem. It was the place where God dwelt and revealed himself in the darkness of the Holy of Holies, a chamber into which only the High Priest entered. The great altar upon which the animal sacrifices were offered in the presence of the faithful did not stand in the Temple but in front of it.

ELY JACQUES KAHN is the architect of a number of the most original contemporary buildings in this country. He, likewise, has written much on architecture. Formerly president of the Municipal Art Society, he is a Fellow of the American Institute of Architecture and Professor of Design at Cornell University.

PERCIVAL GOODMAN is an architect who, in collaboration with his brother PAUL, has written much on architectural, communal, and related questions. He is architect for the recently founded Jewish Museum in New York, as well as for the new Jewish community center in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. At present he is developing plans for a model synagogue.

ERIC MENDELSON was also born in Germany, where he received his training in architecture and engineering and designed many buildings that brought him fame long before his departure for London and then Jerusalem in 1933. His major projects at present are the Park Synagogue in Cleveland, the Temple and Community Center of the Congregation B'nai Amoona in St. Louis, and the Maimonides Health Center for the Chronic Sick in San Francisco. Mr. Mendelsohn's latest publication is *Three Lectures on Architecture* (University of California, 1942).

We do not know when and where the synagogue first arose. We know only that at its inception the Temple and its cult still flourished. From this we may deduce that the first purpose of the synagogue was to furnish a place of worship for those Jews who lived too far away from Jerusalem to visit the Temple, as, for instance, the Jews of Babylonia. The synagogue was not a "house of habitation" for God, nor were animal sacrifices offered there. These sacrifices pertained only to the Temple in Jerusalem. The synagogue was a community gathering place in which the word of God was read and expounded and in which the congregation offered prayers to God.

When the Second Temple was destroyed in 70 C.E. and the sacrificial offering finally came to an end, the synagogue became the only center of Jewish worship and as such it has remained to this day.

WE DO not know what the earliest synagogues looked like. The oldest of those that have survived, and of which in fact only a few fragments remain, date from the early centuries of the Common Era. At that period the Jews, as well as other peoples, were under the spell of Grecian beauty. The synagogue fragments remaining to us clearly show the architectural influence of the Greeks and of their pupils, the Romans. The secular basilicas of their neighbors, designed and erected as bazaars, stock exchange buildings, and courthouses, served as models for the synagogue. Large halls were built to accommodate great throngs and additional space was provided by the use of balconies resting upon beautifully carved columns.

A few minor modifications converted this type of structure into a house of worship. A forecourt was added in which ritual ablutions were performed; it was surrounded by a colonnade. The synagogue was given a prescribed orientation, namely, facing Jerusalem, the Holy City. Balconies were utilized to separate women from men during services; and, finally, a raised platform from which the Torah was read was erected in the interior of the building and a beautiful Ark placed there in which to preserve the Scrolls of the Law.

It was the synagogue which first suggested to all the world the concept of a congregational house of worship, a concept which was adopted by Judaism's daughter religions, Christianity and Mohammedanism.

As the two younger religious groups, Christian and Mohammedan, continually increased in the size and number of their communities, and as the Jews, deprived of their homeland, were scattered among these groups, synagogues were built according to the various architectural patterns of the non-Jewish world, resembling the Christian and Mohammedan places of worship as they had once resembled the Greek basilicas. The large synagogue of Toledo in Spain, with its rows of columns and horseshoe arches, shows Moorish influence; the synagogue of Worms in Germany is built in the Romanesque style of the Christian environment. When the Romanesque gave place to Gothic architecture, the synagogue did likewise: for example, the famous synagogue of Prague with its Gothic columns and pointed arches. In the period of the Renaissance synagogues were

built in that style, and so it went on into the baroque and finally the neo-classical period, when men were again captivated by the beauty of the Greek column. The Polish synagogues, made of wood, are an imitation of the wooden churches of eastern Europe, and the synagogue in Kai-feng-fu in China closely resembles the pagodas of that land. To sum up: though original in religious conception, the synagogue never developed a style of its own.

THE continual change of architectural form in the synagogue in accordance with the prevailing custom of the country and the age came to an end in the beginning of the 19th century, just about the time when the Jews were permitted to leave their ghettos. Furthermore, during the period of the Emancipation they had both the room and the means to build their synagogues where and how they pleased. It is true that as regards the beauty of their synagogues the Jews did not make full use of this freedom of opportunity. But their failure was not a matter of Jewish taste alone; it was related to 19th-century aesthetics as a whole. For at that period there was a complete cessation of the development of new architectural styles and a constant imitation of older forms. In some places churches were built in the early Christian style, in others in the Romanesque or Gothic styles, and the architects vied with each other in the scientific accuracy with which they copied the various forms.

Here again Jews were influenced by the world about them. They also harked back to the styles of earlier times and built synagogues with Romanesque arches and domes or with Gothic columns and pointed arches; or they copied the old mosques in memory of the golden age in Spain under Moorish rule.

Even today we suffer from this same tendency to imitation of the past. I have often been asked in the planning of new synagogues whether these should follow the Byzantine or the Colonial or various other styles. And I usually answer, "Do not adhere to the old forms, but follow the style of our own day." We have meanwhile come to recognize that all of the churches and synagogues built since the beginning of the 19th century suffer from the same defect. They lack individuality. In the Middle Ages the

Moorish or the Gothic style was an expression of the age, with the spirit of which the Jews were also impregnated. But with the passing of time we too have changed and cannot return artificially to the past. Let us have the courage to be ourselves.

This urge to create something individual began toward the end of the 19th century. It found its first expression in buildings designed to serve the major tendencies of the modern age: in office buildings, factories, and railway stations and similar structures. But gradually this style came to be employed also for churches and synagogues. In this respect Germany took the lead. Shortly before the advent of Hitlerism, Felix Ascher and Robert Friedmann built a synagogue in Hamburg and Fritz Nathan a chapel in the cemetery at Frankfort-on-the-Main, both excellent examples of modern architecture. The United States, a leader in modern industrial building, was slow to accept this style for buildings intended for religious purposes. Yet there are in this country men of great talent, both native-born and recent immigrants, who are well equipped to design a modern synagogue.

This new modern style commends itself particularly to us as Jews. It avoids over-ornamentation in order not to obscure the functional purpose of the building, but rather to give it greater emphasis. It parallels our striving toward clarity and truth in our religious thinking. Moreover, contemporary architecture is fully capable of giving to the structure that dignity which its religious purpose demands. The synagogue in Hamburg, of which there is an illustration in my *History of Jewish Art*, has an open forecourt flanked by two low buildings, with the façade of the synagogue between them. This façade has an entrance hall with three wide, broad portals. The high wall rising above the porch is quite plain except for a round window ornamented by a stone grill in the shape of a seven-branched candlestick. All of this gives the building an appearance of quiet exaltation, a quality not achieved in the structures of the preceding decades.

We hope to see the future synagogues of the United States built in the modern spirit and by the best architects available. Such buildings would strongly attract the Jewish worshiper and at the same time be worthy ornaments to the cities in which they stand.

No More Copying

ELY JACQUES KAHN

AFTER reading Mrs. Wischnitzer-Bernstein's article on synagogue architecture and pondering her conclusions, one realizes anew what a baffling task faces any temple committee entrusted with the mission of deciding upon the character, design, and spirit of a proposed edifice.

It is evident that Jewish houses of worship have had a complicated record. The struggle to exist, the desire to be submerged in a community, the equally strong impulse to be assertive once permission is obtained and the funds are available—all of these factors are registered in the buildings now standing wherever Jews have built.

Fortunately, at this moment in the history of architecture, a very definite change is taking place.

In our own lives, as architects, we discovered—after a thorough training in the historical facts of building and a thorough acquaintance with the records of the master builders of other generations—the absurdity of becoming mere copyists. And we came to know perfectly well that the great figures of the past, like Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, scorned to mirror anyone else's work. The most innocent neophyte must know that no matter how strongly tradition held power the artist struggled furiously, if he was worth his salt, to introduce something fresh and imaginative into his own work.

UNFORTUNATELY, architecture has suffered from an oversupply. In the 19th century the world, as population grew, demanded thousands and thousands of new structures, and cities and towns everywhere poured forth architectural platitudes indiscriminately. London, Paris, Chicago, Tokyo, Vienna, Peking resemble each other, strange as it may appear, by virtue of the ranks of second-rate boxes that line their streets. There are high spots, to be sure, the residue of some fine thinking, but the great mass of houses in every town and city constitute mere building, in which the senseless copying of historical ornament has been accepted.

Jewish religious buildings had to cope with this wave of mediocrity and at the same time with the weight of spurious tradition, mainly Moorish.

What we face now is not necessarily a

revolutionary or startling break, but a serious effort in all of our building to answer contemporary problems honestly, in plan, material, and spirit. This is quite a different philosophy from that which assumes that a new building must necessarily reflect some other structure, however good or bad it may be. There is no modern style. Some simple-minded individuals assume that to be contemporary means to accept a dictum that involves copying, once again, certain established or publicized "modern" elements. The good designer will be as wary of copying the boxes, pipe rails, and other whimsies of the current quacks as he would be of stealing from the books.

Let there be no mistake about it: the problem is difficult. One begins with the fact that many people like the things they are already accustomed to, quite regardless of their aesthetic virtues or deficiencies. It is not an easy matter to make them realize that what they cherish is mere acquaintanceship with things they have seen frequently and that they are ascribing solemn virtues to mere reminders of situations, sad or happy, in their lives. It is incredible that really honest designers should have the effrontery to advise a quasi-Gothic, Moorish, or any other sort of historical potpourri as an expression of Jewish culture.

Quite obviously, the task of any architect is to create a practical and beautiful building. But to build one that will satisfy all the desires of any committee is a herculean task. To try at the same time to produce something entirely original makes the task almost insuperable. It is so much simpler to find a comfortable prototype than to argue, that one wonders at the temerity of the architect who insists nevertheless on being empowered to design the ideal building for a selected site, community, and congregation.

ONE may ask, quite properly, where the designer proposes to start. Once acquainted with his problem, with the funds available, and with the wishes of his clients, he will endeavor to find, in his plan, a functional arrangement for a building that will serve the normal weekly requirements as to capacity and, at the same time, accommodate a much larger audience on special occasions such as the High Holy Days.

In the question of character and materials,

the designer immediately faces an age-old difficulty. Does the Jewish building want to shrink into its surroundings and be unobtrusive, or should it be proudly imposing, with a wealth of detail and expensive ornament? If the architect feels, as does the author, that modesty and natural beauty should dominate, he might well create a block, simple and beautifully proportioned and set off by attractive planting, so that the worshiper can step into a quiet atmosphere of dignity and restraint.

The actual shapes and actual details will necessarily reflect the surroundings—a particular city, a particular neighborhood—for modern architecture assumes that good communal planning accepts the building as part of a city, not merely as another package dropped into a location. The final goal is a workable and sensible structure, fashioned with the affection and care that should go into any serious study.

Quite obviously, the result will be as good as the designer is. But this requires the full sympathy and understanding of the building committee, for the architect cannot conceivably have the patience and stamina to do good work under constant interference.

The actual details of the interior, the decorative features of the tabernacle, should be entrusted to the finest artists the Jewish community can muster. We are tired of the reverence and repeated respect paid to the tinsel that usually commands the focus of a service. The Scroll, the Eternal Light, we respect as symbols, but not the forms in which they are presented to us. The fancy trappings are insulting to our intelligence. It is once again the force of tradition that assumes that we must bow to whatever is placed before us, with no right to ask if something more spiritual could not be imagined. It is high time we took stock of our painters, sculptors, and craftsmen and put them to work. The future of Jewish religious buildings is as bright as the imagination of those entrusted with their direction.

What can come through good planning, respect for fine materials, good lighting, ventilation, and, above all, an interpretation of a setting where people can worship in dignity and repose, is difficult to predict. We do know that modern thinking accepts nothing as static. Perhaps such radicalism is too strong for an ancient faith, but since

its resistance and power have weathered so much in the past, that faith can possibly still look ahead to an architectural expression whose vitality and cogency are worthy of such a great religion.

In the Spirit of Our Age

ERIC MENDELSON

IN THIS time of troubles, all religious denominations are more or less aware that services on Sabbaths and Holy Days cannot suffice to base our total life on the great moral principles underlying the religious edifice, that a church or a temple must remain a mere symbol unless faith is supported by ever-present spiritual guidance and the permanent education of the entire congregation.

That is why today's religious centers should comprise three units: the house of worship, which is the House of God; the assembly hall for adult members, which is the House of the People; the school for the education and recreation of children, which is the House of the Torah. To shelter these three divisions, to bring their different functions into an organic planned relationship, to express their material and mental unification, must be the final aim of the architect. It is a task of great complexity that demands a bold approach—the courage of artistic vision and the ingenious employment of all the facilities we have developed in other fields of human endeavor.

A temple with a seating capacity set at the maximum expected on, for instance, the Day of Atonement (i.e., at least twice as large as needed for normal services), is inadvisable for many reasons. The rabbi cannot be at his best in front of empty seats; the adult member of the congregation, after a hectic business week, cannot turn his mind toward a higher plane unless he is carried (at least visually) by the religious intensity of a full house—the palpable sign of collective devotion. His economic conscience has no sympathy with "halls of state" (that formal Victorian relic) used for a few occasions only, which are quite contrary to the informal pioneer spirit that made this country what it is. The young generation, now fully aware of the bare facts of life, rightly abhors mere size and pompousness.

To redirect the minds of our young, to make them aware of their human limitations, to educate them for the age of man we are just entering, our temples must be built to human scale—social centers, as concentrated and flexible as life should be when it runs as a working utility.

THUS our temples should reject the anachronistic representation of God as a feudal lord, should apply contemporary building styles and architectural conceptions to make God's house a part of the democratic community in which he dwells. Temples should reject in their interiors the mystifying darkness of an illiterate time and should place their faith in the light of day. The House of God should either be an inspiring place for festive occasions that lift up the heart of man, or an animated gathering place for a fellowship warming men's thoughts and intentions by the fire of the divine word given forth from altar and pulpit right in their midst.

Since building funds are always too low and high building-costs are here to stay—every war, and especially the last war with its tremendous waste and destruction, has decreased the value of our money—congregations should demand of their architects, as a sheer economic necessity, that they use materials and techniques appropriate to today's wage level and give up architectural methods feasible only at the wage rates of times long past, that they devise plans for buildings whose every room, every bit of space, would be used every day, that they make their plans as flexible as possible, through room combinations, in order to meet the many and varied needs of the congregations, that they renounce superficial and costly decoration and make the layout and structural system the principal expression of technical and artistic ingenuity—so that the synagogue may function somewhat as did the static structure of the Greek temple, which, even when in ruins, retains its magnificent scale and symbolic idea as the house of the gods of Greece, and somewhat as did the dynamic structure of the medieval cathedral, which, even when stripped of all its adornment, remains shining evidence of faith in Jesus.

Both Greek temple and Christian cathedral are genuine expressions of the divine

powers from which the architect's inspiration sprang and, at the same time, manifestations of human power—expressing the spirit of a new age from which his hand and vision received substance and support. We, in this age, however, show an irrational reluctance to grasp our own opportunities to assume the challenging responsibility before us. We hesitate to be bold in designing our homes, public buildings, and temples at the same time that we recklessly probe the secret workings of our material environment.

IT HAS been said that religious structures must be "traditional" in order to impart a sense of the sacred, that the dignity and emotional significance of such buildings can only be expressed through historical associations. To admit this is to deny that religion is an important part of our contemporary society. It is frequently said that contemporary design will not "harmonize." Certainly even the most beautifully conceived contemporary building will suffer if it is arbitrarily forced into a jungle of faked period pieces. This is why it is doubly important to select a site that will do justice to the building and not mar its harmonious integration with its surroundings.

Today we have reformed our liturgy and religious customs in order to free Judaism from the friction of outlived forms, and to make its vital functions conform with the life we have to live. And the experience of two world wars, the profound changes produced by science and technology will of necessity translate the ideals upon which our country was built into the terms of a new age—an age in which these ideals will survive in principle, but must be filled with new content.

The generations among us now mature may not live to see the whole of this promised land, but the generations of our children will certainly breathe its buoyant air. It is for them we plan and build new temples and they, rightfully, will condemn us if the buildings we build for many generations to come reflect in their form conceptions of a world that is not theirs.

If, however, the needs and limitations of the community are seriously appraised, the site carefully chosen, the geographic and climatic factors thoroughly evaluated, and contemporary building methods boldly and

surely employed, the result is bound to be stimulating and sincere—a visual proof that we Jews are full participants in this momentous period of America's history. It is a period that demands centers of worship where the spirit of the Bible is no ancient mirage but a living truth, where Jehovah is not a distant king but our guide and companion. It demands temples that will bear witness to man's material achievements and, at the same time, symbolize our spiritual renaissance. This question no architect can pass upon, but the answer will be recorded in the pages of history now being written.

Tradition from Function

PERCIVAL AND PAUL GOODMAN

As Rachel Wischnitzer-Bernstein has adequately shown, there is no living tradition of construction and style in the architecture of synagogues. The floundering attempts to invent a tradition by rationalistic analogies and *ad hoc* history result, as in most modern public building (the synagogues are neither better nor worse), in a painful superficiality, ludicrous a year after completion. On the contrary, it is just those synagogues, like that in Newport, Rhode Island, which were the plainest handling of a contemporary way of building, that turn out to age gracefully and to take on a certain venerability. Yet there is a tradition in the synagogue: the tradition of the service, of the sacred objects and furniture, and—to a degree—of the iconography—its symbols and decorations—and there is also a tradition of the congregational functions of the building.

In all these there is variation from rite to rite, national group to national group, and generation to generation: what the Sephardim do and what the Ashkenazim do, what the Orthodox do and what the Conservatives do, what the Talmud-learners do and what the American social workers do. But this kind of historical and experimental variation within unexpressed limits is just what is meant by a tradition.

THE point of view of these notes is that a tradition of synagogue-building can be drawn from the tradition that exists, i.e., *the service and the congregation*; it cannot be imported where it does not exist, and

should not exist, in the construction and style. The authors are functionalists. Now the meaning of functionalism is that the principle of design is the living plan, the arrangement of the actions of the users; the architect must look for his design to the service and the congregation, employing whatever means most simply and directly serve their functions. If he attentively and actively looks to the concrete functions, rather than passively accepting the generalities of a "building committee," he cannot fail to make a traditional synagogue. To say it paradoxically, what is needed is more attention to the letter and less to the spirit.

1. To show what is meant by functionalism in synagogue design, let us take some examples from the service. First, the fundamental act of the service, the reading of the Law. This comprises, orthodoxly, taking the Scrolls from the Ark, carrying them in procession to the reading desk, calling up the men of the congregation for the reading, raising high the Scrolls for all to see, dressing them again, and returning them in procession to the Ark. This complicated choreography contains a wealth of material for functional design.

For instance, in the Spanish synagogue Sheeray Tefila in New York, the Ark and the desk are counterposed across an open plain, the benches of the congregation rising sideways steeply from the plain. This arrangement brings out with much beauty the processional of the Torah between Ark and desk, the reader does not have his back to the audience, the parts of the congregation can see each other and those called on are in evidence as they come forward. (There are also certain disadvantages in the arrangement.) The point is that an inventive solution of the manifold parts of this action cannot help being profoundly expressive architecture. And what if the architect keeps in mind also such a special ceremony as the dance of Simhat Torah?

We have space here for just one more example of the relation of service and plan; let us choose the outdoor booth for Succoth. Obviously this calls for a garden plot, which during warm weather can serve also for collations, and—perhaps most important—as a milling-round space for such of the congregation as go outside during long services. The landscaping of such a garden is a diffi-

cult problem of design; the solution of the difficulty will prove to be expressive and traditional.

2. Now concerning decoration: It is a principle of functionalism that the chief care and expense should be given to that which gets the most frequent and attentive use.* What is to be embellished is not the columns that hold up the roof but the things that are intimately handled and scrutinized. (By the same principle, the construction as a whole, its proportion and color, must be clear and expressive, for they exert an omnipresent pre-conscious effect.)

In the synagogue this calls for a much closer integration between architecture, sculpture, and painting than we have seen. Decoratively, the role of the architect is to provide a setting for the sculpture and furniture of the Ark, the desk and light, the Scrolls, just as all these in turn are just the adjuncts of the service and the sense of congregation. What we look for is a team of artists in which the functionalist architect plays to the vision of a Lipchitz and a Chagall. In every synagogue the Ark is a focus of attention; why should not the sculpture of it be given to a master? (On this point it would certainly be useful to have a clarification of the "graven image" injunction. The non-naturalistic icons of the great modern artists might be, oddly, just the most traditional decoration conceivable.)

At risk of being polemical, we must mention two current abominations: the memorial stained glass and the eternal *electric* light. The first is a functional impossibility: the service is throughout a reading of prayers and every one has a book, the light simply must be bright and white. Further, with the Jews as with the Protestants, the visible congregation is of the essence: the mysterious illusive brilliance of real stained glass is glorious, but it is not ours. As to the second point, what is the symbolism of an eternal light that requires no care, that does not threaten to flicker?

3. Concerning the congregation, we must consider both the combination of congregational functions and the architecture of the congregation in the service. The congregational functions are traditionally: the prayer

*See the authors' "Notes on Neo-Functionalism" in *Communitas* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1947), Ch. viii.

service, the study of the adults, the study of the children, festive occasions, the social activities of the sisterhood, the adolescents, etc. These create problems of planning for a number of rooms and for the possible flexible transformation or combination of rooms. There is the suggestion of Ben Bloch, outlined by Mrs. Wischnitzer-Bernstein: "The prayer hall a single unit with the social hall—provided with a collapsible wall and reversible seats—the two rooms joined (for the large crowd) on High Holidays." This is a typical solution that must be studied on its merits in each case. We must not forget the maxim that "an all-purpose object is rarely good for anything."

The sense of the congregation as taking part in the service is the fundamental religious function of the synagogue. If there is anything true in religion that is specifically Jewish, it is this integrating of the individual actors and their community; there is no representative and there is no non-human sacrificial act. The phalanx of prayer shawls, and the rising from the ranks of those called on and their returning to the ranks; ultimately this is the whole of it. Architecturally, *this* must be in evidence: the rabbi, the cantor and his choir, are adjuncts. And what profound, what terrible difficulties are implied in this word *congregation*! For instance, what of the woman's place in the Orthodox rite? Obviously we are here beyond the realm of discussions of buildings, yet who cannot see that apart from these things there is no plan for a building?

4. Put the same difficulty—and worse!—meets us if we consider the heart of architecture, the city plan. For the first topic of architecture is not the building but the town square. It is a topic touched on by Mrs. Wischnitzer-Bernstein when she writes: "In the Middle Ages it had been the practice to enter synagogues at the side—inconspicuously—and there was no doorway in the western façade. The synagogue had to refrain from bringing itself strikingly to notice." It is a question of choice of site and the functional relation to other buildings. Now in America we have no town squares at all: no place that people do not pass through but where they stay because it is the concourse of work, love, and culture.

The problem is not what building dares call notice to itself, but what building has a claim to do so? If, as we believe, every building with a real work, love, and culture function has such a right, we cannot plan without studying the integration of these functional buildings. As architects, can we cowardly avoid raising this question in the reader's mind?

BUT to end on a more pleasant note. Speaking of tradition, Mrs. Wischnitzer-Bernstein mentions the two Temples, but she fails to speak of the chief architectural passage in the Bible, the great chapters, Exodus 25-27, describing the construction of the Tabernacle. If the reader will consult this remarkable set of specifications he will grasp what we intend in these notes better than we can express it.

The passage begins with the materials that are to be gathered from the congregation: "*Of every man whose heart maketh him willing ye shall take My offering*"—the metals, the tent linen, the oil for the light, the wood for the furniture. It proceeds first to the main architectural feature, the Ark. This is specified as a movable furniture sculpturally embellished with cherubim, whose posture is described in detail. Next are specified the other sacred objects and furniture: the Table and the Candlestick of seven branches. Next, the tent to contain these things, all in bright linen "blue, purple, and scarlet" embroidered. The objects are then disposed in the Tabernacle, the Ark behind the veil, the Table and Candlestick before it, and the Altar. Lastly, the Court of the Tabernacle, for the meeting of the congregation.

"Thou shalt command the children of Israel to bring pure olive oil beaten for the light, to cause a lamp to burn continually. In the tent of meeting, outside the veil before the Covenant, Aaron and his sons shall set it in order, to burn from evening to morning." The religion has changed—in principle for the better; the totemic sacrifice and the priestly caste are both gone. They have been replaced by a tradition of learning and a congregation. But the method of functional analysis of the structure can be confidently recommended to architects; and there is no dearth of "traditional" iconographic ideas.

THE EXILES

A Story

EVELYN SHEFNER

BECAUSE I had, in those days, a tendency to collect and cherish grievances, I brooded for months afterwards over the indignities I suffered on my thirteenth birthday, inflating them like the monster balloons made in the shape of eggs, sausages, Mickey Mouse, that were sold outside the suburban station in Lakeside when the weather was fine.

To be sure, these wrongs could be followed back to a happening a few years before, when the sudden bankruptcy of my father's grocery store had shaken my family out of that tidy agreeable lakeshore suburb into the middle of the old Jewish ghetto in Chicago. My mother and father, who had been born into the neighborhood and who were in addition worn out by struggle, sank into our new life apathetically; my small brother Buddie, already a realist, learned to wear his cap backwards and played stick-ball in the street after school with the other little boys on the block. But I was unable to reconcile myself. Often, especially before falling asleep at night, I returned to our old home in Lakeside, walking up the quiet tree-lined avenue until I reached our bungalow, and crossed peacefully into the small backyard where we had planted the hollyhocks and tomato vines—an unfortunate comparison in every way for the noisy hatchery I now inhabited, swarming with hucksters' calls, the women's energetic sidewalk gossip, and the cries of everlasting street games.

On our shabby treeless street, old-fashioned limestone buildings with high front stoops huddled in a row, the narrow pas-

sageways between them littered with candy-bar wrappers and scraps of year-old newspapers. A busy social life, in which I did not take part, gathered on the front stoops day and night. The girls of my age spent much of their time there, singing snatches of popular songs, or insulting and being insulted by a group of boys lounging on the porch of the house next door.

My reserve won me a reputation for snobishness almost at once, confirmed by my habit of using what were called "long words" when I happened to speak with some of the other girls on the block. These meetings, which I avoided out of a mysterious terror, were unsatisfactory on both sides. I intimidated my neighbors as much as they did me, and we usually left off in embarrassment or anger. In time I grew to know them all by name and accumulated some facts about their lives (Milly's father was a milkman and earned thirty-one dollars a week; Rose had broken both her legs in a fall from the third-story window when she was five years old), but they never existed for me as persons, and I had no real curiosity about them. And so, in spite of the warnings of my mother, who said that I was becoming unsociable and hard to live with, I came more and more to prefer my own company; for recreation falling back on reading, long walks, silent observations.

I often felt in my wanderings through the neighborhood like a traveler taking notes on the strange customs of some little-known tribe. Before we moved away from Lakeside I had never, except at occasional big family gatherings, heard the sound of the Yiddish tongue. None of the grocerymen had worn hats and full black beards, no one had ever observed the uncompromising Saturday Sabbath—now even the street games slackened off or fell dead in the Sabbath lull. The wrinkled old women in their shabby brown wigs taking the air in front of their houses on summer evenings filled me with a special resentment. Their eyes

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followed me as I set out on my lonely walks, and when I heard them talking among themselves in Yiddish I was sure they were passing judgment on me because I had decided for myself that I did not believe in God, and with my parents' permission went to the movies on Saturday afternoons.

MY THIRTEENTH birthday coincided with the first night of Passover, as it happened, and all the week before my mother had been drawn up in a flurry of preparation. A lifelong novice in the domestic arts, and only a lukewarm religious believer at best, she responded to all the important Jewish holidays with a confused kind of gallantry. The last morsels of tainted food had been cleared from the pantry, the Passover tableware had been brought up from the basement, for some reason returned and brought up again—and only then did my mother's labors halt. Meanwhile, the significance of the day for me had been slighted and almost forgotten.

That this was far from a cruel oversight I understood much later, when I realized that in this early Depression year my father was working, when he found work, two or three days each week at most. Furthermore, my mother's will was unequal to the ordeal she was then undergoing. Rather than face all the implications of her dilemma, she preferred to evade, to find excuses, to deny the painful facts in a tight hysteria that twisted reality into a more acceptable pattern.

When she sat down at breakfast that morning in her washed-out flowered kimono, she merely said to me, "Dear, you know how important Passover is to us and to Jews all over the world. I'm sure you won't mind being a good soldier and giving up your birthday for the holiday, just this once. We'll try to make it up with a special present next year." Then hinting at the truth neither of us chose to recognize, she added, "This is your chance to show us that you understand."

RIDING on the North Shore train to my Aunt Selma's house in our old neighborhood that afternoon—fortunately we had been invited out for the Seder—I was aware of the ache of renunciation, a new feeling, not altogether unpleasant. It was a bleak holiday. The long ride to the home of my

mother's younger sister had reminded us all of the final trip we had taken in the opposite direction. The first time I heard my mother really complain, she turned to my father when we were halfway there and said, "It will be nice for the children to get some fresh air for a change. They haven't been looking any too well since we moved away from Lakeside."

Once we were in the Rosens' house I was no happier. I had always felt uneasy with my Aunt Selma and Uncle Ben, recognizing them, correctly, as my enemies. The inevitable electric shock inflicted on me by their two daughters—who came running up scuffling their feet on the heavy oriental rug—seemed the ultimate proof of the indignity of entering as an outsider a community where once I had been an equal citizen. Now that I no longer indulged quite so frequently in reveries of our return and almost had wiped off as dead losses our bungalow and my old friends, I gave in more and more to a blighting jealousy.

For a time I amused myself by joining my brother and my cousins Elayne and Rosalie in their game of raising up electric charges. As we shuffled on the thick carpet from the metal lamp to the radiator to one another, our hands buzzed and stung like malicious bees. Then, tiring of the sport and remembering the gravity of the day for me, I sat down and picked up the last volume of *My Book House*.

This stirred another source of my envy. Even now, when I could be superior about children's books (I had already read *David Copperfield* and *Les Misérables*), I experienced again the excitement once awakened in me by these green volumes, now dog-eared and spattered and torn. They had outweighed by far the importance of the *Red Fairy Book*, the *Blue Fairy Book*, and the *Brown Fairy Book*, a series I could obtain at our local public library. I remembered the grudging permission my cousins had given me to come over and read the volumes through, never allowing me to take them out of the house. *My Book House* had been given to Rosalie on her eighth birthday. The Rosens had acquired their third radio, an improved model with a loudspeaker, while we were yet to buy our first. And while Rosalie was close to my age and

Elayne two years younger, both girls already wore gold wrist watches. I got up and joined my elders in the dining room.

When I came into the room my Aunt Selma, tired and edgy after a day in the kitchen, was involved in a quarrel with her husband's mother over the correctness of having the milkman deliver during the holiday period their regular brand of butter, distinguished only by a printed label attached to the packages which read "Approved for Passover."

"For God's sake, Ma!" she finally yelled in exasperation. "It all comes from the same cows!"

Her argument failed to pacify the old lady, whose objections were part of a family ritual, enacted year after year with no apparent revision. "Grandma Lotte"—so I had been taught to call her—was the only religious purist in our midst. Muttering under her breath, she now made her way to a chair near the window and sat down heavily with her back partly turned to the company, indicating by a series of aggrieved sniffs and her attitude of withdrawal that what happened from this time on was no concern of hers.

The preparations for the holiday meal were almost complete. All the customary equipment lay on the table: the stacks of fluted matzoth, the glasses of red wine, the bitter herbs, the dish of apples and nuts, the hard-boiled eggs, the salt water. My mother, in her tired black dress, was putting the finishing touches to one end of the table at the side of her overweight stylish sister. Off in a corner my father and my heavy, dogmatic uncle were deep in some "business" conversation. I wondered how much the ceremony meant to any of them.

I knew what it meant to me. During the past year I had been converted to atheism with the aid of a book for young people written by a follower of Robert Ingersoll, who had exposed in simple terms but with crushing logic the falsehoods spread by all organized religions. This change of faith which had shaken my ideas to their foundations had been viewed lightly by my family, who had refused to see in it anything more than a silly childish whim, though my father on one occasion had threatened to send me to Hebrew school.

I could imagine my parents' embarrass-

ment and the scornful laughter of my aunt and uncle should I intrude my convictions now; could even, with dread, summon to mind the old lady's scandalized outcries once she understood what I was saying. It was better that I remain silent; there was no higher court to which I might appeal. My parents had proved their weakness by the stern, evasive way they had answered my very reasonable questions about religious customs and the way they had urged conformity on me in various other matters "because that's how things are done in this world." How could I, only a student in the first semester of high school, presume to urge honesty on them?

Standing in the little pool of inactivity I had created for myself by the sideboard, I stared coldly at this demonstration of men's enslavement to their habits. Everyone has a need for some set of fairy tales, I thought; and if this particular set fails to please me, why shouldn't I make up my own? But as I looked from my distance on the harmonious acts in which all these persons were involved—the old lady had left her chair by the window and approached the table; my uncle had broken off his conversation with my father; now both men were putting on their hats—I felt suddenly that I could not have been more cut off from the life around me had I been living on another planet. For a brief moment rising above my bitter self-righteousness I saw myself clearly as others must see me—an eternal bystander, a spectator at life's feast. . . .

Fortunately, my mother broke into my mood. "What are you dreaming about?" she said. "Go get the other children and tell them we're ready to begin."

THE Passover service was long drawn out, tuneless, and uninspired. Grouped around the heavy white damask cloth that covered the Rosens' mahogany dining-room table, extended by two leaves, the participants went through the motions for which they had come together—chanting, humming, breaking off pieces of matzoth, drinking sips of wine—in attitudes that ran the gamut from anxiousness to boredom.

I could tell that Buddie was impatient for his share of the ceremony to be over. Because he was the youngest male present, it was his duty to ask the traditional "Four

Questions," in which the meaning of the holiday was explained and reaffirmed. But when placed on public exhibition, as we all knew, he usually stammered, became red, and sometimes broke down altogether. Anticipating his failure he was sitting abnormally still, his face locked and unhappy, embarrassment thrown before him like a shadow. His burden was scarcely lightened, I decided, by my mother's behavior; flashing an obstinately cheerful smile in turn from Buddie to me, from time to time she included in this fond barrage all the members of the party. From her smile, it was evident that no person had ever been quite so happy as my mother, nor any occasion so joyous.

Her enthusiasm was not met by the Rosens'. Elayne and Rosalie kept up for an astonishing length of time a display of regal good manners, sitting up straight in their chairs, glancing only occasionally at their watches and patting their mouths with their hands when they yawned. When they did fall, it was into a conspiratorial whispering and giggling that broadened to include a hasty imitation of their grandmother, who had slipped her glasses down to the end of her nose and with pursed-up lips was reading the services at arm's length.

"If you kids don't behave yourselves for a half-hour more, you'll be sorry, I'm warning you!"

Uncle Ben had paused for a moment in the droning recital to allow my father and Grandma Lotte to catch up with him. He shot an angry glare to his daughters, who immediately straightened up and became listless, as before. His right hand summoned us to partake of the potatoes and salt water. Then we all dipped, passed, tasted, chewed.

The heart had gone out of these observances forever since the death of my grandfather, the year my father lost his business. And while no references of any sort were made to our bad fortune, as the meal progressed I was reminded not only of my brother's embarrassment but of my father's ignominy. Out-chanted by the booming voice of his brother-in-law (who sat glistening and red-faced, a gray Homburg pushed back on his head), my father mumbled his praises to God for the deliverance of his people from bondage. The stained, disreputable hat he wore seemed like a crowning insult. I could not bear to look at him, though ordi-

narily I found his face impressive. When, on cue from my uncle, I tasted the mouthful of bitter herbs, the gall scouring my tongue returned me gratefully to the reckoning of my own troubles.

My expression may have reflected this train of thought, for my mother sent me a warning glance and bent her head for a whispered lengthy conversation with her sister. For a moment I saw lingering on my mother's face too the aftertaste of the bitter herbs. Then both women smiled meaningfully at me, the aunt apparently with real benevolence, losing for once the brassy quality that had always reminded me of a clanging bell. The rest of the evening passed more easily. In the presence of her two girls, who darted me looks full of a scornful pity mingled with respect, my aunt praised me for being a "good soldier"—I saw she had borrowed the phrase from my mother—and invited me to come out to the house the next Saturday afternoon to go to the movies with them. And no one said anything about my writing poetry.

THIS had been a source of difficulty between us since one day the previous winter, when Uncle Ben had come upon me so engaged in a corner of the living room while the other children were playing outdoors. The criticism had been directed not at the poetry—which was bad enough—but at the activity, which was regarded as suspect or unhygienic. Since then we had kept up a running feud, I hitting out at what I already recognized as his Philistinism, he appealing to my parents in the interest of my health and future social adjustment. Assuming that the best way to rid me of the vice was to shame me out of it, he often addressed heavily caustic comments underlined with cigar smoke to "the great poetess" or "Miss Shakespeare." And as he enjoyed this game thoroughly, I knew how difficult it must have been for him to give it up, even for one night.

Nevertheless, in spite of these concessions, in spite of my fine resolves, in spite, almost, of myself, when we reached home that evening I dissolved into a weakness of self-pity. No sooner had we entered the shabby, littered hallway and mounted to our apartment than I felt rising within me a mortal outrage. Without speaking to anyone and with-

out removing my hat and coat I went immediately to the bathroom, where I paused for some time listening to the sound-waves vibrating through the floor from the radio of our noisy neighbors in the flat below. The indistinct rumble, intrusive as the odor of a cooking meal, maddened me, and I burned with a desire to reach down and mangle the blaring instrument with my own hands.

For want of a better gesture I turned the hot and cold faucets on full blast and stood leaning above them, gazing into the mirror at the reflection of my swollen face, distorted almost past recognition. As I looked into my own eyes through the rising steam I received briefly a warning that I was embarked on a perilous and unwise journey, and that there was still a turning back. The moment of inner struggle passed quickly. In a fling of bravado and at the same time feeling somewhat foolish, I plunged my right hand into the stream of scalding water, enduring with a dim satisfaction the pain I suffered.

When that became unbearable I snatched my sick-red hand away and cradled it within the well one, stroking and petting it. My rage softening into melancholy, I remembered my neglected and outcast fate; and after a time I began to cry.

Even had my sobs not been audible through the locked door my long absence would eventually have been inquired into, for I was encamped in a public utility. But my cries reached the outside world. When the anguished wails coming from the bathroom began to penetrate the flat, my mother approached the door.

"What's the matter, dear?" she asked foolishly. "Won't you come out and tell us?"

Her voice revived in me memory of the warped expression I had detected on her face at the dinner table. I remembered also the newspaper-wrapped parcel my father had carried home under his arm, that contained, I could tell from previous experience, a pair of my uncle's castoff shoes. I wept for these too, then, and mellowing I spread my tears to cover the narrow, degrading cage where we were trapped forever and where gradually we would grow small and twisted and befouled. And finally I mourned for the general misery which, I knew, lapped the earth like a natural tide.

Finally, by banging on the door and ordering me to stop this nonsense at once, my father was able to force me to come out. Almost blind with tears and speechless with shame and grief, I hardly heard him say that he was sorry, he hadn't realized that childish things still meant so much to me, when he was a boy no one even knew when he had a birthday, won't I please stop crying now for God's sake and he would get something nice, a surprise, for me tomorrow.

By then it was useless to protest, to claim I was weeping for him as well as for myself, or to point out that the only way he could relieve my constant and usually inarticulate unhappiness was by an act apparently beyond his powers. I nodded mutely, still shaken by great involuntary sobs; and as these died down, gradually the household recovered from the state of emergency into which my seizure had plunged it. My mother was pale, I saw, apparently holding back by her last resources the feelings I had so freely expressed. And although she spoke to me kindly, I knew she was disappointed and resentful and would find adequate occasion for passing moral judgment on my relapse in the future.

Still, no one noticed my scalded hand. And the next day my father broke open the little savings bank made in the form of a barrel where Buddie deposited the pennies and nickels that came his way at long intervals (my brother was the family usurer) and extracted a dollar and twenty-eight cents. Out of this he bought a pair of sixty-nine cent stockings for me—I would have needed a new pair soon in any case—and then pocketed the rest for carfare.

II

THESE memories tempered the excitement that might otherwise have run ahead and greeted my birthday the following year. A few signs were in my favor. My father had found a regular part-time job as a clerk in a cigar store, although money was still a very rare commodity in our house. There was no danger of a clash with sacred rites, Passover was late this year—but the picture of my brother's miserable face the day his savings bank was rifled kept me from developing the subject at any length in my imagination.

As usual my birthday came during "Clean-

Up Week," the annual spring vacation from school, when one day passed like another and time hung heavy on our hands. The day began according to schedule, with a quarrel with my brother. I had a bad conscience about him, for many reasons, and it infuriated me to see him commit the sly, provocative acts he had lately taken to—drinking down the last glass of milk in the bottle, snatching, as he did now, the last piece of toast from my plate.

From where we sat at breakfast in the dark shoe-box kitchen I could look directly into the windows of our neighbors across the way; as they could into ours. I did not care to have them listen in on so petty a controversy, even if I had seen and overheard from their side far less civilized family disputes. Instead, I began a staring contest with Buddie.

For minutes—uncountable—our narrowed eyes burned and penetrated across the table. The pleasure finally drained from this activity, we divided the table into two realms of possession, mine and his, the lengthwise crack in the oilcloth marking a disputed boundary. Along this we maneuvered tea cups, spoons, the sugar bowl and salt cellar. At any moment, I was sure, the game would come to slaps and blows.

But meanwhile I had become aware of a familiar discussion going on in the living room. In the last few months my parents had taken to quarreling about their money troubles, and an unpleasant struggle was shaping up between them. Although they tried to shield us from these sessions, I could already recognize the pattern.

"Joe, I won't discuss it anymore, something will have to be done!" My mother's voice, lowered but intense, carried into the kitchen and broke up our petty squabbling. It must be something more important than the light bill this time, I decided. Buddie and I had already been instructed in what to do should we be home alone, and the gas or electric company bill-collectors arrive. (In an emergency, better to have the electricity shut off than the gas. One can always eat by candlelight, but one cannot cook by it.)

My father's voice rumbled, but did not carry well. Its tone, however, was not reassuring. When he came home afternoons from the cigar store lately he would engage

in sputtering quarrels with my mother as she prepared supper in the kitchen; and there had been evening meals when neither of them spoke, but passed dishes between them silently, breaking the silence only to urge us to eat.

Now, with some final mumbling and whispering, the conference in the living room came to an end. As he went out of the house, my father slammed the door. I glanced back at my brother, and we traded the look of accomplices. I got up and left him sitting at the table. Really, he was far too stupid to quarrel with.

"WHY don't you go out for a long walk on such a nice day?" my mother approached me shortly after lunch. "In this beautiful weather, why sit moping around the house? You can read some other time." Then on an afterthought, running her hand through my crop of disordered hair, she gave me thirty-five cents and told me to get a haircut first, before the barbershop filled up.

My walks were secret, and to be ordered to take one struck me as a real violation. Furthermore, I disliked going to the barbershop, where in that den of shiny machinery and movie magazines I felt particularly weak and outlandish, and usually believed that people were staring or laughing at me.

As I struggled into my light spring coat and left the house I was suddenly overwhelmed by a passionate *ennui*. Everything around me was stale, used up, forgotten. This arid little corner of the city even the early spring freshness could not touch with wonder; the tedious looking ahead to a whole summer's vacation, through which I would search aimlessly for something to do; my ravenous daydreams that would restore to me the homeland I knew was lost forever. . . . What was a birthday? Merely marking another signpost on the road from boredom to boredom. . . .

Half-aware of my course, I skirted a row of junk shops that were particularly offensive to me, and found I was walking toward the barbershop. Almost every step in the next three blocks held unpleasant associations. Directly across the street was a large poultry store, faced by rows of slatted pens where a shifting company of chickens, geese, ducks, eked out irritably their last hours on this earth. Passing by one day I had been struck

by the mysterious choices involved before the customer carried a bird protesting and struggling inside to be slaughtered, and had been so overwhelmed by the human parallel I had been unable to return to the spot for months—let alone eat chicken.

There was only one other customer waiting when I entered the barbershop, a thin woman with yellow hair darkening to brown at the roots, who sat chewing gum over a copy of *Screen Romances*. I nodded hello to Mr. Grossman—who had almost finished cutting the hair of some elderly man—sat down two seats away from the other customer and picked up a movie magazine. Through the wall behind me came the even whirring of the drying machines and the jerky rhythm of female conversation, rising now and then to a high-pitched staccato.

Presently the barber's wife, the overseer of the beauty parlor in back, came out to inspect the latest arrival. Seeing that I was not fully grown, she nodded almost pleasantly, fine cracks appearing in the layers of rouge and enamel that covered her face. Her lips, however, did not lose their profound sneer.

The barber's wife made a spectacular picture in those days. Her face alone flaunted the harmonies of the most improbable tropical birds, and she added to her colorfulness by wearing gowns, low-cut or sparkling with sequins, that clung like casings to her sausage-shaped body. Her dyed black hair climbed into a fantastic arrangement of dips and curls, jewelled rings glittered on her fingers, and red at their tips. For all that, she was an unhappy woman. Jealousy had twisted her into this tasteless caricature. Mrs. Grossman was known to be insanely possessive of her fat blond husband and allowed him not a moment's peace at the shop, arriving early and staying late, neglecting house and family to be always within seeing and hearing distance. Her affliction had already sent her into two nervous breakdowns, from which she had spent months recovering at some distant hospital.

Today, wearing a purple dress and green eye-shadow, she eased herself into the chair next to the other customer, smoothing out the wrinkles around her waist in one flashing gesture. "Such a day already, Louey!" she called to her husband, who was brushing the fallen hairs from the collar of the elderly

man and helping him on with his coat. "They're driving me wild, those girls back there."

As he did not answer, she leaned over toward the other customer confidently. "All day long"—she mimicked the incompetence of her employees—"it's 'Where are the new combs Mrs. Grossman, The man didn't come for the towels, Why won't the porter sweep up the floor when we ask him?' I don't get a moment's peace from them."

The movie magazine was dull, but Mrs. Grossman was much duller. I shuffled the pages and tried not to hear her self-important harping. However, realizing that the barber's wife was not to be ignored, I finally put down the magazine and gave her my full attention. Now that the barber had begun work on the yellow-haired woman, she had shifted her position to the vacant barber-chair near the window, which she switched around so that she sat directly facing the pair.

"Tell Mrs. Feldman about the scandal with Buzzie Levin," she urged her husband; and then herself addressed the customer. "Do you know old Mr. Levin, he owns the jewelry store next door, he has a gambler for a son?"

SCISSORS in hand, the barber took up the cue. "Buzzie raised a little fuss here last night," he began, "because his girl married another fellow. For three years she kept begging him to go into his father's jewelry business because she sees no future for herself with a gambler, but he was too proud to take anything from his old man. Anyway, Buzzie claims he first heard yesterday afternoon his girl is getting married that evening, so he runs over to her house like a crazy man, and has the nerve to tell her the doctor just gave him six months to live and he wants to beg her to put off the wedding for only six months, so he can die in peace."

The two listeners nodded, smiled cynically, and clicked their tongues. "Actually," the barber went on, "that's not so funny—it'll probably come true some day. Those gamblers sit up playing cards all night in some smoky room, they all drink, some of them even take dope. They laugh at us, they think we're fools to work . . ."

"So! Get to the point already," interrupted Mrs. Grossman. "Tell about the broken window."

Her husband appeared not to have noticed. He ran a clipper up the back of the customer's neck, then untied her apron and released her. "The girl says she's heard that story before, so Buzzie goes away and gets started drinking, and by evening he's not like a human being. He walks into his father's store—right next door here—just before closing, and in front of two customers screams at the old man that he ruined his life, he wishes he never laid eyes on him, why couldn't he be brought up in an orphan asylum, it would be better than the kind of family he had. Then when his father threatens to call the cops—you got to admit they never did get along like father and son—Buzzie walks outside and slams his hand straight through the front window."

On her way to the cash register, the customer turned back, shocked. "And did he kill himself?"

"No, the funny thing was he was lucky, he just got a few scratches. We were closing up then too, but they brought him in here and we washed off the hand and after awhile it stopped bleeding. The boy was shaking like a leaf though, we couldn't get him quiet, I never saw a man so worked up in my life.

"Then the father"—Mr. Grossman chuckled—has first to board up his window. You can't leave a jewelry store with a broken window all night. It takes hours before he can leave. You should have seen, half the window was gone. It looked like someone had tried to clean him out. . . ."

"Why don't you tell her the end?" the barber's wife said petulantly. She walked over to the cash register and rang up the customer's money. "You always leave a story hanging in the middle of the air. The end was that some gambler friend of Buzzie's came around and took him away, and Buzzie sat up in a speakeasy all night, crying and putting curses on his father."

MRS. Grossman disappeared into the rear of the shop, leaving behind her a backwash of peace. In silence the barber began to clear his way through my hair. Dangling in the chair, my feet still falling a few inches short of the footrest, I watched the black snips fall pathetically curled and disjointed to the cape protecting my shoulders. The words that had agitated the barber-

shop still hung in the air, and I quickly fitted them into a picture of the young gambler: a dark nervous man, flashily but very neatly dressed, with beady black eyes that never settled on an object for long.

In my eyes all gamblers were outcasts. I would never allow myself to look into the pool parlors or coffee houses in the neighborhood where they were known to hang out. Passing one of these establishments on some errand or other, I would quickly turn my face away, fearing to catch a breath of the dark and disturbing presence they threw off. This wholehearted prejudice against gamblers was one of the few convictions of my mother I still shared implicitly. It had been confirmed, rather than shaken, by a Mr. Appletree—a member of the profession—whom our next-door neighbors had taken in as a roomer one summer, a sad-faced man whose only apparent vice was a habit of coming in at odd hours and sleeping late into the day.

Curiously, considering the intensity of my views, there had been no gamblers anywhere among our acquaintance or in our family—except, I thought, for my Uncle Ben, who played poker several nights a week with some of the men on his block. And even these activities were merely a diversion for him, since he earned a comfortable living for his family as a partner in a small real-estate business out in Lakeside.

However, I went on, feeling the barber's hands moving tenderly around my head—when one inquired into the matter carefully, what difference really existed between my uncle's card games and Buzzie Levin's?

In the light of revelation that burst over me even the bottles of pink and green lotion on the shelf opposite stood out, suddenly, more liquid and more brilliantly colored. For all we knew, all men might be gamblers, and their success or failure in this life a matter not really under their control. Luck, it may be, caused the earth to spin around like a huge roulette-wheel, determining the outcome of everything human beings attempted, desired, or did not even know they wished for. With a freakish turn empires tottered, cities fell, great fortunes were made or unmade. . . .

I squirmed uneasily in the chair, so that the barber had to ask me to keep still. Some things were still permanently right or wrong;

and for a grown man to earn a living by playing cards—drinking, and probably cheating too—was wrong. There was, after all, a world of difference between my uncle's blown-up self-regard on the one hand, and the gambler's misfortunes on the other. By comparison, my uncle stood like a monument, even his protruding stomach a source of comfort and assurance. Beneath him lay a lesser world: gamblers, bootleggers, peddlers, washerwomen—and us.

It was true. Very little was needed now to cut us off from Lakeside, family, past, forever. We had gone down so far already; what was to save us from touching the very bottom? We were already worse off than my neighbor Milly, whose father the milkman had a steady job and would be retired on a pension when he was sixty-five. If times got much worse, and they certainly were getting no better, my father might be without work altogether. How would we live?

Even our sunless four-room flat seemed desirable beside the dreadful alternatives I could still only vaguely conjure up—debtors' prisons out of Dickens, hideout scenes from gangster films. When disaster struck, as it might any day now, I should have to leave school and take some low, tawdry job, becoming a cigarette-girl in a speakeasy or some occupation even more dreadful; rouged, hardened, incalculably changed. Knowing this as she must, I thought resentfully, my mother still thought it right to pretend to us our setback was only temporary. The gamblers, at least, had the courage to recognize themselves for what they were. . . .

When I stepped down from the chair Mrs. Grossman had returned and taken up her station by the cash-register at the window. There were still no other customers in the front of the shop. The pale afternoon light coming through the uncurtained window picked up reddish-purple tones in her dyed hair, which warred insistently with the darker purple of her dress. Shaken into a new humility, I thought the gaudy middle-aged face before me, crowned and hemmed by purple, resembled the petals of a gorgeous underwater flower, or even more grotesquely, a discolored corpse washed up by the lake. I handed her my thirty-five cents, hoping I could leave, for once, without opening a conversation. But perhaps feeling that some recognition was due me—since Mr.

Grossman, exhausted by his recital, had not spoken to me either—she commented, "That's a high-class job my husband did on you. The kind of haircut he gave you, you'd have to pay a dollar and a half for in a fancy beauty salon downtown."

Emerging with difficulty from the speculations that had taken hold of me since I sat down in the barber's chair, I thanked her; then in a burst of misplaced confidence added, "I took a haircut today because it is my birthday."

The irrelevance and childishness of my reply amused her. Looking over her shoulder at her husband and grimacing in his direction, Mrs. Grossman inquired with obvious intention, "And did you take a bath today too because it is your birthday?"

I PICKED up my coat and walked out without a word. A strong wind had arisen, stirring up the settled dust and old newspapers that lay on the sidewalk, and from the sudden grayness of the sky it looked as if it might rain. I glanced in when I passed the jewelry store, but the window display held the same undistinguished items, arranged precisely in their usual order on a black velvet mat. Mr. Levin was at the back of the store, seated over a bright light and peering through an eyepiece at an object he held in his hand.

I had thought to catch a reflection of myself, and my new haircut, at the point where the two windows joined. But instead I was confronted by an apparition of the young gambler. For a moment he appeared before me so vividly that I thought he might speak: not dark and unscrupulous like a movie villain as I had pictured him before, but an ordinary young man, broad-shouldered, on the blond side, with short blunt hands that must have held the cards clumsily for all their practice—a little stupid, unsuccessful even as a gambler. In his moment of agony he sat bowed over a bleeding hand, attended by loud-mouthed strangers, an infallible target for their gossip: less clever than his father, no match for the girl who had thrown him over. Had he cried, I wondered, as I had the year before, when all the loss and bitterness in the world had descended on my shoulders, and unable to destroy this world I could only weep for my own powerlessness?

THE MONTH IN HISTORY

The United Nations

AFTER two-and-one-half weeks of intensive lobbying and tactical maneuvering by all interested parties, the Special Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations emerged with a resolution substantially embodying the intentions of Britain and the United States: a moderate-sized committee, excluding the Big Five, with broad powers to investigate the problem of Palestine. That much had been expected.

But as the session closed, there was a completely unexpected event. Soviet delegate Andrei Gromyko, in the course of his final speech, said: (1) It would be unjust to deny the Jews the right to a state of their own; (2) The best solution in Palestine would be the creation of one dual, democratic Arab-Jewish state; (3) If Arab-Jewish relations were so bad as to make such a state impossible, partition would be justified. This marked a startling reverse in Soviet Communism's historic opposition to Zionism. Some Zionists compared it to the Balfour Declaration.

The Assembly's Resolution

The General Assembly's resolution was passed on May 15, 1947 with forty-six nations voting in favor, seven against, and one abstention. The text:

"Whereas the General Assembly of the United Nations has been called into special session for the purpose of constituting and instructing a special committee to prepare for the consideration at the next regular session of the Assembly a report on the ques-

tion of Palestine, the General Assembly resolves that:

"1. A special committee be created for the above-mentioned purpose consisting of the representatives of Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, India, Iran, Netherlands, Peru, Sweden, Uruguay and Yugoslavia;

"2. The special committee shall have the widest powers to ascertain and record facts, and to investigate all questions and issues relevant to the problem of Palestine;

"3. The special committee shall determine its own procedure;

"4. The special committee shall conduct investigations in Palestine and wherever it may deem useful, receive and examine written or oral testimony, whichever it may consider appropriate in each case, from the mandatory power, from representatives of the population of Palestine, from Governments and from such organizations and individuals as it may deem necessary;

"5. The special committee shall give most careful consideration to the religious interests in Palestine of Islam, Judaism and Christianity;

"6. The special committee shall prepare a report to the General Assembly and shall submit such proposals as it may consider appropriate for the solution of the problem of Palestine;

"7. The special committee's report shall be communicated to the Secretary-General not later than 1 September 1947, in order that it may be circulated to the Members of the United Nations in time for consideration by the second regular session of the General Assembly."

The resolution was opposed by the five Arab states—Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Syria—plus Afghanistan and Turkey. Siam abstained.

Behind the Arabs' opposition to the resolution was their failure to win inclusion of any reference in the text to the independence of Palestine as the basic objective

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of the special committee's recommendations to the General Assembly.

The Arabs also objected to giving the committee any authority, explicit or implicit, to consider the Jewish problem as a whole or the problem of Jewish refugees in particular as part of "the question of Palestine." Such authority was implied in paragraph two, under which the special committee could decide that they were among "all questions and issues relevant to the problem of Palestine." And paragraph four, authorizing the committee to conduct investigations "wherever it may deem useful," could mean visiting DP camps in Europe.

The Independence Issue

The Arab fight for Palestine's independence was the main struggle of the special session.

It began with an unsuccessful effort to add an item to the agenda entitled: "The termination of the mandate over Palestine and the declaration of its independence." It continued throughout the session with efforts to add similar items to various paragraphs of the committee's terms of reference.

The Arabs made a vigorous case for themselves. They pointed to the United Nations Charter, to Wilson's Fourteen Points, to the Mandate's provisional recognition of Palestine's independence, to the Zionist stand in favor of independence, to their natural right to the country.

Nations opposing the Arab demand found themselves in a somewhat uncomfortable position. No one wanted to be on record against independence for any nation. As a result, most delegates made it clear that they were, of course, for Palestine's independence. They were for it "immediately," "in the near future," or "ultimately," but they were all for it. They were for the independence of "Palestine," or of Palestine's "population," "people," or "peoples." The various phraseologies hid mental reservations about the length of trusteeship, possible partition, etc. But somehow nearly everybody got on record in favor of "independence" in terms that would not compromise whatever solution they intended to support.

The nations that opposed the Arab effort insisted that mentioning independence would prejudice the issue, though they favored independence. To this the Arabs

replied that not mentioning independence was prejudging the issue.

The inclusion of independence in the terms of reference was consistently supported by the Soviet Union and its bloc, with occasional abstentions by Poland and Czechoslovakia. It was also supported by the Asian nations. For the Soviet Union such a stand was useful propaganda among subject peoples outside its borders.

The first test came in the vote on whether to include the Arab item on the agenda. It was lost, fifteen in favor, twenty-four against, ten abstaining. The Arabs were supported by the Soviet bloc, with Poland and Czechoslovakia abstaining.

The Various Formulations

The major battle on mentioning independence came during the drafting of the terms of reference in the Political and Security Committee of the General Assembly, the membership of which was identical with the General Assembly. The initial proposal, presented by a subcommittee, read: "That the committee shall bear in mind the principle that independence for the population of Palestine should be the ultimate purpose of any plan for the future of that country."

The Jewish Agency suggested the following addition to this paragraph: "and various other issues connected with the problem of Palestine."

The Soviet Union and India proposed the following substitute: "To prepare and submit . . . proposals . . . including a proposal on the question of establishing without delay the independent state of Palestine."

A Philippine proposal mentioned independence as the "ultimate purpose" of any proposed plan; an Iraqi proposal specified independence as "the primary purpose" of any plan.

After two days of discussion, all proposals were referred back to a new subcommittee. The subcommittee agreed to disagree and returned with four versions of how the matter might be put. According to these variations, the purpose of any plan for the future of Palestine might be independence for 1) "the population," 2) "the people," 3) "Palestine," or 4) independence for the population should be "the ultimate purpose" of any plan. The Soviet Union and India continued to insist on their own version. The

Arabs supported number three variation.

The United States came up with its own substitute for the whole: "The special committee, in studying the future government of Palestine, shall give full consideration to guarantees of the rights necessary to the peace and independence of its peoples." This formulation, Warren Austin announced triumphantly, "does not beg the question in any way." To the Arabs, however, it was obviously, in its use of the term "peoples," an invitation to partition.

Andrei Gromyko then suggested amendments to Austin's proposal which made it read: "... give full consideration to guarantees of the rights of its peoples necessary to the peace and independence of that country."

By this time, the matter having been wrangled over for four days, confusion was in complete control of the political committee, and the moment was ripe for a motion by France to delete all reference to any of the formulations on independence. The motion was carried, twenty-nine to fourteen, with ten abstentions. Britain and the United States voted in favor of deletion, the Soviet Union against. Subsequently, two more brief and unsuccessful efforts were made to include a reference to independence, one through a Soviet-Indian proposal, the other in a Polish motion.

Had the question of Palestine's independence never been raised, its omission from the terms of reference might have meant little. But, since the question was raised, vigorously and insistently, the omission was a political decision of some importance. The Indian and Philippine spokesmen, representing peoples struggling out of foreign rule, warned that it was a matter of considerable importance to subject people everywhere. This was a fact that the Soviet Union no doubt had firmly in mind in actively sponsoring independence proposals. Other nations were aware of it, as was demonstrated by the long and painful efforts to formulate a paragraph on independence that would get them on the record without violating their mental reservations.

When it became clear that the independence proposal would lose, the Arab states made formal declarations reserving the positions of their governments on all future occasions.

Hearing for the Zionists

The problem of how the special session would hear the Jewish Agency for Palestine and the Arab Higher Committee kept the Assembly, its Steering Committee, and Political and Security Committee in a state of near-turmoil for most of the first week. There was never a serious possibility that the Agency's request for a voteless voice at the plenary meetings of the General Assembly would be granted. The Agency was allowed to appear before the Assembly's Political and Security Committee, which consisted of all fifty-five nations and which actually arrived at all decisions and then confirmed them by transforming itself into the General Assembly. The Agency was not permitted to participate in discussion. It presented its case and answered questions. The same procedure was permitted the Arab Higher Committee.

Despite the intensive feelings, the hearings were not a matter of great importance. The powers that would decide the fate of Palestine were not likely to learn anything new from half-hour summaries of the respective cases during the preliminaries of setting up an investigating committee.

The prestige value of the Agency's appearance was also questionable. While the League of Nations was in existence, the Agency's representations were always made through the Mandatory. Now, it was true, the Agency's representatives were being heard directly for the first time. But the Arab Higher Committee, a self-appointed coterie dominated by one family, was given the same recognition. The Agency's standing was international and arose out of a provision of the Mandate that provided for recognition of a body representative of Jews throughout the world who wanted to build a homeland. The General Assembly's resolution ordering a hearing for the Agency before the Political and Security Committee reduced the Agency's standing to a representative of Palestinian Jews when it put the Agency's request on a par with "other communications of a similar character from the Palestinian population."

The Agency's case was nevertheless presented by Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver of Cleveland, Ohio, who declared that the Agency "speaks for the Jewish people of the world who are devoted to this historic ideal (the

establishment of a Jewish national home)."

The Agency's prestige suffered further from the grudging recognition given it by the United States. After stating that the Agency should be the only Jewish organization to be heard by the Political and Security Committee, Warren Austin added:

"It should also be borne in mind that the Jewish Agency is not speaking for all the Jews in the world. My government is in receipt of numerous communications from various Jewish groups which make it clear that they do not recognize the Jewish Agency as their spokesman. Similarly, I understand that there are many Jews in Palestine who do not share the views of the Jewish Agency."

Among the other Jewish organizations, whose requests to be heard were turned down, were Peter Bergson's National Committee for Hebrew Liberation and the Agudas Israel.

The principal value of the hearing for the Agency was to make counter-propaganda against the many speeches of the Arab delegates. Of equal propaganda value was the campaign to get the hearing. Zionist pressure on Washington was so great that United States spokesmen at the General Assembly felt called upon to make some of the longest speeches of the session in explanation of their opposition to seating the Agency at plenary meetings. This was especially true in view of the Soviet bloc's support of the Agency request. The Soviet line was to allow the most and the broadest possible discussion. The United States view was that plenary meetings of the General Assembly could be attended only by nations. The Soviet Union, it was felt, was interested in establishing a precedent whereby such organizations as the World Federation of Trade Unions, a Soviet-dominated group, and possibly such groups as the Chinese Communist regime might get hearings before the UN.

The importance of prestige as a factor in these hearings was emphasized by the parliamentary handsprings which the Assembly went through to give both groups equal standing. The original General Assembly resolution ordered the Political and Security Committee to hear the Agency specifically and to consider requests from all other groups. The Political and Security Com-

mittee immediately decided that it would hear the Arab Higher Committee. However, Arab feelings were ruffled because the Arab Higher Committee had not been specifically mentioned in the original Assembly resolution. Therefore the Political and Security Committee, having decided to hear the Arab Higher Committee in accordance with the general authorization it had given itself as the General Assembly, retransformed itself into a plenary meeting of the General Assembly for the purpose of affirming the decision it had made as the Political and Security Committee. Thus the terms of the invitations to the Agency and the Arab Higher Committee were put on precisely the same level.

The Zionist and Arab Pleas

The statements of the Jewish Agency for Palestine and of the Arab Higher Committee before the Political and Security Committee revealed nothing new. The formal case for the Agency was presented by Dr. Abba Hillel Silver, chairman of the American Section of the Executive of the Agency. Supplementary statements in answer to questions were presented by Moshe Shertok, chairman of the Agency's political section, and David Ben Gurion, chairman of the executive. Silver's basic approach was the familiar interpretation of the Jewish national home in Palestine as an independent commonwealth. He avoided the word "partition." He looked forward to the day when "the representatives of the Jewish people of Palestine" would be seated in the United Nations.

Henry Cattán, for the Arab Higher Committee, based his case on the natural rights of the Arab to Palestine. Emile Ghory, who replied to questions for the Arab Higher Committee, felt called upon to defend the exiled Mufti of Jerusalem. "The Jews are questioning the record of an Arab spiritual leader," Ghory exclaimed. "Does that properly come from the mouth of a people who have crucified the founder of Christianity?"

The Arab case for Palestine, as a matter of fact, was repeatedly being presented by the five Arab nations represented in the General Assembly. The delegates of Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon were particularly loquacious. Egypt and Saudi Arabia confined themselves largely to seconding the others.

The US and British Role

The spokesmen of the United States said as little as they could get away with on the basic issues of the problem despite strong Zionist pressure for a reaffirmation of the US position. Secretary of State George C. Marshall, in response to the pressure, said that an enunciation of US policy would "limit the full utilization" of the report which the Assembly was about to authorize. US policy had not changed, he said, but was not being pressed at the time.

It became clear, however, that the fundamental aim of US policy was not necessarily a particular plan of its own, but any solution that would command general agreement. If the UN is to be successful, Herschel Johnson said early in the session, its solution "must be not only fair, but one which has the support of world opinion and which is thought to be fair." Later Warren Austin said that a generally supported solution was "more important than anything else." Unless the UN's solution "can have the approbation of all men, or nearly all men, it will not be powerful enough in itself to be a real solution of the problem," he added.

US policy, then, was not necessarily a

plan that the US thought to be fair, or that the Zionists and Arabs would accept as fair; the US was seeking a solution which world opinion would accept as fair.

Britain's Sir Alexander Cadogan said almost nothing throughout the session. Both the Zionists and the Arabs were restrained in their references to the British. The strongest attacks came from the Soviet bloc. But Cadogan refused to be drawn into argument. His only non-procedural utterance was in reply to sarcastic questions about Britain's willingness to accept the Assembly's recommendations. "If the United Nations can find a just solution which will be accepted by both parties, it could hardly be expected that we should not welcome such a solution," he said. "All we say is that we should not have the sole responsibility for enforcing a solution which is not accepted by both parties and which we cannot reconcile with our conscience."

The Special Committee

The main argument over the composition of the special committee of investigation was whether or not the Big Five should be represented. After Britain, the United States, and China indicated that they preferred not

Voting at the Special Session of the General Assembly by the Big Five and by the Nations on the Special Committee of Investigation

Motions

Column 1. Arab motion to include on agenda item on termination of mandate over Palestine and declaration of its independence. Defeated: 15 Yes; 24 No; 10 Abstain. (Plenary meeting, May 1.)

Col. 2. Polish motion to give Jewish Agency hearing before plenary meeting of General Assembly. Defeated: 8 Yes; 39 No; 7 Abstain. (Plenary meeting, May 5.)

Col. 3. French motion to delete all reference to independence of Palestine in terms of reference for investigating committee. Carried: 29 Yes; 14 No; 1 Abstain. (Political and Security Committee, May 12.)

Col. 4. Polish motion to include Big Five on investigating committee. Defeated: 7 Yes; 26 No; 20 Abstain. (Political and Security Committee, May 13.)

Col. 5. Motion to adopt terms of reference for investigating committee. Carried: 45 Yes; 7 No; 1 Abstain. (Plenary meeting, May 15.)

(Y—Yes. N—No. A—Abstain.)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
China	N	N	Y	N	Y
France	N	N	Y	A	Y
United Kingdom	N	N	Y	N	Y
United States	N	N	Y	N	Y
U.S.S.R.	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Australia	N	N	Y	N	Y
Canada	N	N	A*	A*	Y
Czechoslovakia	A	Y	A	Y	Y
Guatemala	A	A	N	N	Y
India	Y	N	A	A	Y
Iran	Y	N	A	A	Y
Netherlands	N	N	Y	N	Y
Peru	N	N	Y	N	Y
Sweden	N	N	Y	A	Y
Uruguay	N	A	Y	N	Y
Yugoslavia	Y	Y	N	Y	Y

* The Canadian delegate was chairman at this meeting.

to serve, the result was a foregone conclusion. In the voting, only the Soviet bloc held out for inclusion of the Big Five.

The makeup of the special committee was along geographic lines. Uruguay and Guatemala were regarded as extremely friendly to Zionist aims. Peru was felt to be sympathetic. Czechoslovakia was traditionally pro-Zionist and shortly after the special session opened President Edouard Benes reaffirmed his belief that "the setting up of a Jewish state in Palestine was the only possible just solution of the global Jewish question." Yugoslavia was expected to adhere closely to the Soviet line. The Iranian government announced that its member of the special committee would receive no instructions and would be permitted to reach his own conclusion. It was accepted, however, that the Iranian member would come to conclusions favorable to the Arabs. India was expected to support the Arab view though with careful attention to the rights of the Jews in Palestine. Australia and Canada, though independent from the United Kingdom in foreign policy, were expected to support the British view. Sweden and the Netherlands were part of the Western alignment and were expected to be influenced by British and American views.

The Net for the Zionists

On the whole, the Jewish Agency had reason to be satisfied with the results of the special session. The risks were tremendous, but thus far nothing basic to the Zionist view had been lost. The terms of reference of the special committee embodied neither the Zionist nor the Arab requests but, at least negatively, they were more satisfactory to the Zionists. The special committee itself had the power to determine which issues were relevant and how much weight they should be given. And the General Assembly would make the final decision. The main battles were still ahead.

The one definite net gain for the Zionists was the Gromyko declaration. The immediate reaction to it was, unofficially, jubilation. But this gave way to restrained optimism. Too much jubilation over a Soviet speech might not have gone down well with United States public opinion. And it was far from a hard and fast commitment to partition, which solution, in any case, had still not been officially accepted by the Agency.

The Gromyko Declaration

UNTIL Andrei Gromyko's major speech the day before the Special Session of the General Assembly ended, Soviet tactics were based on something for everybody. By and large, Gromyko blandly supported everything the Zionists asked for and everything the Arabs asked for, despite the contradictions. He expressed himself on all subjects, large and small. The United States was for the narrowest interpretation of the specific function of setting up an investigating committee. Gromyko wanted the fullest possible discussion of all possible issues and was willing to have practically anybody participate in it. By these tactics, the Soviet Union had nothing to lose, and Britain could not possibly come out very well. Though he was the most frequent user of the veto power in the Security Council, Gromyko felt no embarrassment in joining in needling Britain on whether it would accept the General Assembly's recommendations. For the Soviet Union, Palestine was an ideal opportunity to splash around in troubled waters* and Gromyko made the most of it without seeming to be too anxious.

It was therefore all the more surprising when he decided, at the end, to take a definite stand. Earlier in the session, Poland had taken a position similar to the one Gromyko ultimately took. However, Poland's position was not regarded as necessarily presaging a new Soviet position. Throughout the session, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and occasionally Byelo Russia failed to go along with the Soviet vote. This had been expected. Throughout the session, too, Gromyko had spoken of "the" independent state of Palestine. At no time had he given any indication of breaking with the Soviet position in favor of a unitary Jewish-Arab state in Palestine, and Soviet commentators continued along this line right up to the last moment. His address, therefore, was a surprise.

Gromyko said:

"We must bear in mind the incontestable fact that the population of Palestine consists of two peoples, Arabs and Jews. Each of these has its historical roots in Palestine. That country has become the native land of both these peoples, and both of them occupy an important place in the country economical and culturally. Neither history nor the conditions which have risen in Palestine

now can justify any unilateral solution of the Palestine problem, either in favor of the creation of an independent Arab state, ignoring the lawful rights of the Jewish people, or in favor of the creation of an independent Jewish state, ignoring the lawful rights of the Arab population. Neither of these extreme solutions would bring about a just settlement of this complex problem, first and foremost since they both fail to guarantee the regulation of the relations between Arabs and Jews, which is the most important task of all.

"A just settlement can be found only if account is taken in sufficient degree of the lawful interests of both peoples. These considerations are the basis upon which the Soviet Union delegation concludes that the lawful interests both of the Jewish and of the Arab peoples of Palestine can be defended in a proper manner only by the creation of one dual, democratic Arab-Jewish state.

"Such a state should be founded upon equal rights for the Jewish and Arab populations which might constitute a foundation for cooperation between these two peoples in their common interest to the advantage of them both. . . .

"Is it not clear that in solving the question of Palestine it would be very useful to take into account the experience gained through such friendly co-existence and friendly community of life between different nationalities within the framework of a single state? The settlement of the problem of Palestine by the creation of a single Arab-Jewish state with equal rights for Jews and Arabs might in this way be considered as one of the possible solutions, and as the solution most deserving attention, of this complicated problem.

"Such a solution of the question concerning the future of Palestine might provide a sound basis for the peaceful coexistence and cooperation of the Arab and Jewish populations of Palestine, in the interests of both these peoples, for the good of the whole population of the country, and for the peace and security of the Near East.

"If it were found that this plan was unrealizable on account of the deterioration of relations between Jews and Arabs, and it is highly important that we have the opinion of the committee on this question, then it would be necessary to consider an alterna-

tive solution which, like the first, has its advocates in Palestine and which consists of the division of Palestine into two independent, separate states—one, Jewish, and one, Arab.

"I repeat, such a solution of the question of the future of Palestine would be justified only if relations between the Jewish population and the Arab population of Palestine were, in fact, so bad that it was impossible to reconcile them and to insure the peaceful coexistence of the two peoples in that country.

"Both these possible alternative plans for the solution of the problem of the future of Palestine should, of course, be studied by the committee."

Essentially, for Gromyko, as with a growing number of advocates of partition in Palestine, partition was an admission of defeat. It was a second best solution, and second best not after a Jewish state in all of Palestine, which Gromyko definitely rejected, but second best after a binational state. Protection of Jewish and Arab peoples, Gromyko said, could be achieved "in a proper manner only" by binationalism. Partition, therefore, presumably emerged as an "improper" solution and acceptable only to insure peace.

It was also worth noting that while the Soviet commitment to a binational state was definite and unequivocal, partition was something that it was necessary to "consider" only if Jewish-Arab relations were impossible to reconcile.

The Flight from Marx

In reaching his conclusion, Gromyko seemed to have given up Karl Marx in favor of Theodore Herzl as the basis for the solution of what he called "the Jewish problem in connection with the problem of Palestine."

Gromyko began with two points. First that the mandate over Palestine "has not been justified." Second, though he did not use the term "homelessness," he emphasized the importance of doing something about Jewish refugees. He then said:

"The experience of the past, particularly during the time of the Second World War, has shown that not one state of Western Europe has been in a position to give proper help to the Jewish people and to defend its interests, or even its existence, against the

violence that was directed against it from the Hitlerites and their allies. This is a very serious fact, but unfortunately, like all facts, it must be recognized. The fact that not a single Western European state has been in a position to guarantee the defense of the elementary rights of the Jewish people or compensate them for the violence they have suffered at the hands of the Fascist hangmen explains the aspiration of the Jews for the creation of a state of their own. It would be unjust not to take this into account and to deny the right of the Jewish people to the realization of such an aspiration."

It is not necessary to dwell on the inconsistency of recognizing the justice of a Jewish state while advocating a binational state as the only "proper" protection of Jewish interests. Gromyko's line of reasoning was obviously intended as a background for acceptance of partition rather than advocacy of binationalism in Palestine. In the past the Soviet attitude was that the communization of Western Europe would eliminate the Jewish problem. But now, like Herzl and unlike Marx, he was accepting anti-Semitism as the justification for a Jewish state.

Of course the impulse to Jewish nationalism came mainly from the Jews of Central and Eastern Europe rather than Western Europe. This was still true for a Central and Eastern Europe under Soviet domination. History might also prove that it was true of the Jews within the Soviet Union.

It was perhaps mere sentimentality to try to analyze the shift in the Soviet position on ideological grounds. Lenin's successors had done stranger things to Bolshevik theory.

The proper approach was to determine how the new policy served Soviet power politics in the Middle East. The objective of this policy was to get Britain and the United States out of the Middle East. To achieve this objective, unitary independence, partition, and trusteeship or continuance of the Mandate were in declining order of desirability. The short-term Soviet objective in the Middle East was to make as much trouble as possible for Britain. From this standpoint, it may be that the Soviets regarded partition as the most mischievous and untenable course.

The Terror

TERROR in Palestine continued while the General Assembly deliberated. One week after the session began the Irgun Zvai Leumi made a sensational jailbreak from the Acre prison fortress in which 29 Jewish prisoners and 182 Arab prisoners escaped. Four Jewish and one Arab prisoner were killed in the delivery.

The General Assembly took note of the situation. With the Arab states abstaining, the assembly adopted a Norwegian resolution reading:

"The General Assembly calls upon all governments and peoples, and particularly on the inhabitants of Palestine, to refrain, pending action by the General Assembly on the report of the special committee on Palestine, from the threat or use of force or any other action which might create an atmosphere prejudicial to an early settlement of the question of Palestine."

SIDNEY HERTZBERG

CHURCH, SCHOOLS, AND THE CONSTITUTION

J. M. O'NEILL

ONE does not have to go far in civil liberty activities to realize that the whole field is confused by categorical slogans and historical myths. One of the most universal and, to my mind, currently one of the most harmful of these is the belief in a so-called "great American principle of *complete* separation of church and state."

Appeals to this alleged principle are today creating dissension and confusion in the discussion of all sorts of proposals affecting contacts between government and religion.

It has recently been invoked by those opposing Mr. Taylor's appointment to the Vatican and by the opponents of released time in public school for religious instruction, of school credit for such instruction, of public transportation for pupils of church schools, of Bible reading and prayers in the

public schools, of N.Y.A. and G.I. Bill of Rights funds for students in church schools, of tax exemption of church property, and of federal aid to parochial schools.

Each and every one of these proposals is as debatable as, for instance, peacetime conscription. Each should be supported or opposed on its individual merits, the sole criterion being its value in terms of the public welfare. Above all, no one, by virtue of the side he is on in such a debate, should be held to be un-American, unconstitutional, or subversive of our traditions.

Today, appeals to this so-called principle are being used to deny opponents the opportunity of debate; they are attempts to gain debatable ends without the burdens and risks of debate. There is no such great American principle and there never has been.

If there is such an American principle, it must have been formulated, adopted, or promulgated by some group or groups authorized to speak for America. If such an event has ever taken place we should find the evidence of it in the federal constitution, in the acts of Congress, or in the constitutions or laws of the several states. There is no such evidence in existence. In its absence, the mere opinion of private individuals or groups that there *should be absolute* separation of church and state (a condition that has probably not existed in recent centuries in any civilized nation on earth) does not create a "great American principle."

I

DOES the Constitution of the United States provide for the complete separation of church and state? One passage in the First Amendment to the Constitution (the first article of the Bill of Rights, 1791) contains a statement which some may have in mind when they invoke this principle. It reads: "Congress shall make no law respect-

RECENT efforts to obtain public funds for parochial schools, corresponding efforts to "bring religion into the public schools," and—most recently—a Supreme Court decision permitting the expenditure of public funds to provide bus service to parochial schools, have once more spotlighted one of the important issues in American life: the relations of religion, government, and education. J. M. O'NEILL, a liberal and a Catholic, here advances the thesis that "the American principle of separation of church and state," commonly invoked in controversy over this issue, has no relevance to the specific problems facing us today. A different point of view was presented by Professor Milton R. Konvitz in our June 1946 issue; and Dr. Mordecai Grossman will contribute an article opposing state aid to religious schools in an early issue. Professor O'Neill is chairman of the speech department at Brooklyn College and chairman of the Committee on Academic Freedom of the American Civil Liberties Union. He has written or edited many standard books on rhetoric and speech. Professor O'Neill was born in Victor, New York, in 1881, and is a graduate of Dartmouth. He writes here in his personal capacity, not as a spokesman for any organization.

ing an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." That is all there is, and the evidence available in American political and judicial history proves that it means exactly what it says—no more and no less.

Years before 1791, the question of the "establishment" or "disestablishment" of religion in the colonies and the states was about as live a topic as labor legislation is in 1947. This passage meant something important to the men who wrote and adopted it. They did not write carelessly because the matter was of little importance, or ambiguously to catch voters on both sides of the street. The phrase "separation of church and state" would not have served their purpose as well, for it is a thoroughly ambiguous phrase which may mean anything from absolute and complete separation to something like the separation of the legislative, judicial, and executive branches of our federal government.

The clear statement in the Bill of Rights was put into the Constitution to prevent the setting up in the United States as a whole of something specific that had been bitterly fought and already defeated in a number of the individual states, viz., a state religion. The men who gave us the Bill of Rights wanted free and equal opportunities for religious worship, belief, and practice for all faiths. Their clear intentions were accurately phrased in the Constitution, and *all other matters concerning government and religion* were left to the individual states.

The argument that the words "no law respecting an establishment of religion" mean "no law in reference to religion or to any religious institution," an argument sometimes seriously presented in law courts, is wholly inconsistent with the constitutional situation which governed the adoption of the First Amendment, is denied by the contexts from which phrases supporting this argument are taken, is contrary to the purpose stated by leaders in the fight against established churches and by scholarly commentators, and traduces the known verbal competence of James Madison, who phrased the amendment.

If the argument is valid, the first part of the first sentence of the Bill of Rights is clumsy and ambiguous and the concluding phrase ("or prohibiting the free exercise thereof") is redundant. If it is valid, all laws dealing with tax exemption, building regulations, fire prevention, sanitation, curriculum, teacher qualifications, state inspection, state examinations, credits, etc. are violations of the First Amendment in so far as they apply to churches and church schools. Further, through the operation of the Fourteenth Amendment (adopted 1868), such regulations are now unconstitutional even when expressed in *state* laws. If this argument is valid, it would now be unconstitutional anywhere in the United States to use public funds in part-support of hospitals, orphanages, or homes for delinquents, conducted by religious organizations. Yet this procedure goes back to the beginning of the country and is accepted today, as throughout our history, as a normal and wise practice.

It is simply impossible to believe that Madison, Jefferson, and the other Founding Fathers supposed they were adopting a prohibition of transportation, textbooks, lunches, or other services to pupils in church schools, to be provided by *state law from state funds*. They knew that they were writing only a limitation on congressional legislation for the United States *as a whole*, to be adopted by the states as a part of their delegation of power to the federal government. They knew that the doctrines of the First Amendment as they wrote it were not restrictive of the constitutions and laws of the *several states*. These doctrines did not limit the powers of the individual states until after the adoption of the Fourteenth Amendment in 1868. So, whatever this restriction amounts to today, that restriction could not *possibly* have been a part of the *intention* of the men who were responsible for the First Amendment.

A GAINST the contention that the purpose of the phrase prohibiting Congress from making a law "respecting an establishment of religion" was the complete separation of church and state, I offer the following facts:

First, Madison's original wording of this phrase was "nor shall any national religion be established." This language thoroughly disproves the claim that Madison's purpose was to forbid public aid or support for religion (since such matters were not under national authority), or to outlaw the use of public funds for religious schools *by the states*.

Second, this amendment alone in the Bill of Rights was phrased explicitly to restrict only the power of Congress, and to leave untouched the powers of the several states: "Congress shall make no law."

Third, in 1789 the Congress which gave us the Bill of Rights refused to submit for ratification a proposed amendment which said in part: "No state shall infringe the equal rights of conscience." Even if that amendment had been adopted and ratified, it would not have set up complete separation of church and state. Had it been put into the Constitution, no state could have set up an established church, of course, since that would "infringe the equal rights of conscience." But under that amendment a state could freely (if it wished) give impartial aid, financial or otherwise, for any purpose, to all religions desiring it, because this would not "infringe the equal rights of conscience." But the Bill of Rights Congress refused even this limitation on state authority. Thus the Founding Fathers, far from prohibiting all state support to religion or religious institutions, left the states free even to set up established churches and to restrict religious freedom.

Fourth, about the only schools Madison and Jefferson and their contemporaries knew were largely or wholly under religious auspices. "Complete separation," such as Justice Rutledge (in the New Jersey bus case) says is prescribed by the Constitution, has never obtained in any state in the United States. Even Jefferson's plan for a system of public education for Virginia included a school of theology for the training of clergymen!

In brief, either Madison and Jefferson and their contemporaries considered the possibility of prohibiting any use of public funds

by the state in aid of religion, or in support of institutions or enterprises under religious auspices, or else they did not consider it. If they considered such a prohibition they decided against it, since they made no attempt to write this into the Bill of Rights. If they did not so much as consider it, they could not have intended to accomplish it.

Fifth, the Fourteenth Amendment, which was written and ratified in 1866-1868 to create and protect the citizenship of the recently freed slaves, now extends the restrictions of the First Amendment to the several states. It states: "No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States."

Obviously, an amendment incorporated into the Constitution in 1868 could not alter the purpose or the meaning of an amendment of 1791. It could and did alter the effect—by spreading it to include all of the states.

This extension of the First Amendment to the states was unplanned, unintended, and unrecognized for years after it happened. President Grant, elected in 1868 as the candidate of the party responsible for the Fourteenth Amendment, in 1875 recommended a new amendment to prohibit state support of religion or religious schools. James G. Blaine, an outstanding Republican congressional leader of the time, sponsored Grant's amendment in Congress. Congress, as in 1789, refused to adopt the amendment—indicating once again its intention to leave the states free in this matter. In 1880 James A. Garfield, in his speech accepting the Republican nomination for the Presidency, also recommended prohibiting tax support of religious education. Clearly these three dominant Republicans of that period did not believe that the Constitution already prohibited public support of religious education.

Finally (as reported by Fraenkel in *Our Civil Liberties*), the Supreme Court did not recognize that the Fourteenth Amendment placed on the several states the restrictions of the First in regard to freedom of religion, speech, and the press until a half cen-

ture after it became part of the Constitution.

In the light of these facts, no one has a right to believe that Congress in adopting the Fourteenth Amendment *intended* to forbid state support of religion or religious education.

THE common attempt to make a mystery out of what Madison meant by "an establishment of religion" (an extreme instance is found in the dissenting opinion in the New Jersey bus case, February 10, 1947) is both historically and semantically incomprehensible. It obviously means just what it means in the writings of Madison, Jefferson and the other Founding Fathers, and of historians and commentators throughout the last century, viz., a state church or religion—a single religion or church enjoying a formal, legal, official, monopolistic relation to government. This is the meaning given in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. This is the way in which the term has been used for centuries in speaking of the established Protestant churches of England, Scotland, or Germany, or the Catholic establishment in Italy or Spain.

For example, John Adams said, "If Parliament could tax us, they could also establish the Church of England." Sam Adams said, "The establishment of a Protestant Episcopacy in America is also zealously contended for. . . . We hope to God such an establishment will never take place in America." Judge Story in his *Commentaries* wrote: "The real object of Amendment I was to prevent any ecclesiastical establishment which would give to any hierarchy the exclusive patronage of the federal government."

The phrase "separation of church and state" in this accurate, constitutional sense is so used by William Warren Sweet in his *The Story of Religions in the United States*, by Morrison and Commager in *The Growth of the American Republic*, and others. Cardinal Gibbons was clearly using the phrase in this exact sense in his *A Retrospect of Fifty Years*: "The separation of church and state in this country seems to Catholics the natural, the inevitable, the best conceivable

plan, the one that would work best among us, both for the good of religion and of the state. . . . American Catholics rejoice in our separation of church and state; and I can conceive of no combination of circumstances likely to arise which should make a union desirable either to church or state."

The many references to the fictitious principle in the recent Supreme Court decision on the New Jersey bus case may give the old myth a glow of specious vitality. While the actual decision of the Court gives no endorsement to the principle, some of the argument in the majority opinion, and much in the dissenting opinion, does.

The decision of the Court is in agreement with its earlier favorable decisions in regard to Bible reading in public schools and textbooks at public expense for pupils in parochial schools. It is also in agreement with almost universal state practice in tax exemption, the paying of public funds for services rendered to such church-controlled institutions as hospitals and the like, and the numerous laws and public regulations "in respect of" education in religious schools. Here, as in earlier decisions, the alleged principle gets sustenance only from fragmentary *obiter dicta* of some of the judges, chiefly Justice Rutledge's dissenting opinion.

This dissenting opinion, relying upon "history" to show that the First Amendment means something that it does not say, omits the controlling facts of history cited above, does not cite a single quotation from either Madison or Jefferson showing that either of them ever was opposed to government support of religion except as an aspect of an "established" religion, and omits the host of available quotations from both of these men which show that they consistently used "establishment" to mean an official and monopolistic union of one religion and government.

IN ALL of the discussion leading up to the action of the Congress of 1789, it was "a condition and not a theory" which confronted the leaders in the fight to prohibit establishment. Establishment was the rule not only in England and in Scotland, but in all of

Europe, both Protestant and Catholic, and in most of America itself. At the beginning of the Revolution the Anglican Church or the Congregational Church held positions of full or partial establishment in all but four of the thirteen colonies.

The handful of Catholics in this country at the time played no important part in the disestablishment discussion. They numbered about 24,000 at the end of the Revolution, about two-thirds of them being in Maryland. As a small minority, even in Maryland (where the Episcopal Church had long since become the established church), they were naturally in favor of disestablishment. Early in the 18th century, when the dissenters and Quakers in Maryland were brought under the English Act of Toleration of 1689, the Catholics were excluded.

Contrary to the frequent assertions of eminent men, both Catholic and Protestant, neither the genuine, specific American principle of "no established church" nor the vague, spurious principle of "complete separation of church and state" is a Protestant as distinct from a Catholic principle. Established or state churches have been an almost unbroken rule ever since the Reformation in the Protestant countries of England, Scotland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, and in the countries of Eastern Europe which have broken away from the Roman Catholic Church. In Holland and Switzerland the state has contributed to both Protestant and Catholic church schools.

If the almost universal existence of state churches is good evidence, it is apparent that outside of the United States most Protestants and most Catholics agree on the principle of an established church. In this country, on the other hand, practically everyone agrees on the principle of *no* established church. *This is a genuine American principle.* There is probably no other public principle upon which greater unity could be obtained today. Yet one might think on the basis of some of the arguments circulated today concerning specific measures that there is a fundamental disagreement in America on this issue between Catholics and Protestants.

II

THE state constitutions and state laws likewise offer no comfort to those who would find in them an American principle demanding complete separation of church and state. The various states have a wide variety of provisions touching religion, particularly as regards education, in their state constitutions, laws, and court decisions. For a time it was contended that the First Amendment prevented the states from legislating in this area. But it was shortly recognized that the words "Congress shall make no law" was not a restriction on the state legislatures.

The people of the various states have therefore been wholly free to enact whatever constitutional or statutory provisions in the religious area they wanted. They have exercised their freedom rather thoroughly, and the provisions adopted have been various, and variously interpreted.

The states differ widely on Bible reading in the public schools, released time for religious instruction, use of public-school buildings for religious purposes, hiring public-school teachers who wear religious garb in the classroom, giving credit for religious instruction, etc. A recent survey by the National Education Association reports that on seventeen of such disputed practices showing relations between religion and public education or between public agencies and religious education, over half of the states allow over half of the practices. Every state allows some of them. And this survey does not include tax exemption among the seventeen practices discussed.

Bible reading in the public schools has been more frequently and more diversely dealt with by the various states than any other one topic concerning religion and education. The states have of course been wholly free, since the Supreme Court has held that this subject does not raise a federal issue.

In some states *a statute requires* Bible reading in all public schools; in others, *a statute prohibits* it in all public schools; in still others, *a statute permits* it; while in still another group, *court decisions permit* it.

Some states provide by statute for excusing pupils who wish to be excused during the Bible reading. Other states grant the same privilege by court decision. In other states there is no provision for excusing pupils. About a dozen states require no comment on the reading. In many states, prayers or comments, or both, regularly accompany it.

The inevitable conclusion is that the so-called "great American principle of complete separation of church and state" is not an American principle at all, but only a spurious slogan. The principle that there shall be no established church, no state church, no organic union between the state and *any one church*, is the only American principle in regard to church and state that has any authority whatever. On this principle there is no controversy in this country.

III

HOWEVER, getting straight on the true character of this fictitious principle does not give us the solution to the problems which have been confused by reliance on it. The fact that we cannot by an appeal to a general principle prohibit all contacts between government and religion does not mean that we have to provide for such contracts. The wisdom of any measure is a wholly different question from its constitutionality, and there are still before us in this area problems which must be solved on the basis of what is wise for 20th-century America.

None of the measures put forward to solve these problems has anything whatever to do with the question of an established church. The adoption of all of them together would not create an established church—even if the Constitution allowed it.

What are these problems? Here are the most urgent: the Protestant-school problem, the Catholic-school problem, released time, public transportation of pupils to parochial schools, and federal aid to education including aid to parochial schools.

I shall let Dr. Charles Clayton Morrison, editor of the *Christian Century*, formulate the first problem: "If inclusion of religion in

public schools cannot be worked out, I see for Protestantism only one conceivable alternative—a drastic one. I see nothing for the Protestant churches to do but to establish their own schools, somewhat on the model of the Roman Catholic parochial schools, and to withdraw their children from the public schools." Dr. Morrison's is only one of many voices being raised today to much the same effect in Protestant meetings and periodicals.

I shall not presume to try to solve this problem. However, from my limited point of view, the difficulties in the way of either of the above suggested remedies seem enormous. How can "religion in the public schools" be worked out? What religion? Even if the great number of Christian sects be reduced by grouping all the Evangelical Protestant denominations as one (a major operation, I suspect), there would still be in addition: Roman Catholic, Episcopalian, Russian Orthodox, Christian Science, Mormon, Ethical Culture, Orthodox Jewish, Reform Jewish, Mohammedan, and many others. The public schools belong to all of them. Shall the schools teach concepts of religion that are common to all the religions in America? I doubt that there are any such concepts. If any could be found and phrased they would necessarily be so vague and general that no one could become much interested in whether or not any one believed them. What would the unaffiliated, the unchurched, the agnostics, the atheists, think of the teaching of such concepts in their public schools? The public schools belong to these groups, too.

The difficulties in the path of Dr. Morrison's second way out, Protestant parochial schools, while perhaps not so nearly insoluble as those in the way of religion in the public schools, are very great. They can perhaps be best considered in connection with the second big problem mentioned above—the Catholic-school problem.

Catholic parochial schools are only a partial solution to the problem of education for Catholic children. Many people seem to believe that all the Catholic children of the

Europe, both Protestant and Catholic, and in most of America itself. At the beginning of the Revolution the Anglican Church or the Congregational Church held positions of full or partial establishment in all but four of the thirteen colonies.

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Catholic parochial schools are only a partial solution to the problem of education for Catholic children. Many people seem to believe that all the Catholic children of the

country are in Catholic schools, and that therefore Catholics intrude in other people's affairs when they discuss public-school matters. The fact is that only a *minority* of the Catholic children of the country are in Catholic schools. Only a *minority* of the Catholic parishes and missions of the United States conduct parochial schools. And even where there are parochial schools many Catholic parents send their children to the public school rather than the particular parochial school available. (The word *particular* should be stressed. In some sections of the United States, Protestants send their children to Catholic parochial schools because of the inferior nature of the public schools available.) The Catholics of the country consequently have a tremendous stake in the public-school system—a fact which many of them seem not to realize. So parochial schools are no simple solution, either for Catholics or Protestants.

The difficulties of providing adequate physical facilities and adequate teaching staffs are very great. Money alone—even public money—is not the whole answer. The limited supply of teachers adequately trained both in regular school subjects and in religion is a tremendous obstacle. The teaching orders of nuns are not growing fast enough to furnish teachers for all of the Catholic children of the country even if there were enough space in the schools to take them in. In the diocese of Brooklyn in February 1946, 3,098 pupils registered for the Catholic high schools, and 2,143 were refused for lack of room.

Protestant schools might not have these exact problems; but providing schools, and finding, training, and paying enough lay teachers would certainly be difficult even with unlimited public funds to draw upon. It seems quite evident that no complete system of parochial schools for Catholics or Protestants can ever be established except at public expense. In which case public funds would have to be furnished to all other groups desiring them, and then there might soon be very little left of the public-school system. Can anyone who grasps even dimly the na-

ture of the problems of our American democracy contemplate without dread such a disintegration of our system of public education?

THE released-time program for religious education of children in public schools is a widespread and sharply debated method of providing some formal, organized religious instruction. Under it, pupils in public schools are excused for part of one afternoon each week for religious instruction given by teachers of various denominations. It has been vigorously opposed and, as usual, the "great American principle" has been invoked against it. In the most celebrated lawsuit to arise over this topic (*McCollum vs. the Board of Education, Champaign, Illinois*), the Circuit Court of Champaign County, in upholding the constitutionality of the released-time program, said of this particular argument: "It seems plain that the primary object sought to be obtained in the constitutional provisions was that there should be no state church. In this sense there is no question but that the constitutional provisions sought a separation of powers of church and state, but the relators counsel in their brief give this phrase 'the separation of church and state' a far broader meaning." For the correct construction of the word "establishment" in the First Amendment, this Court quoted the United States Supreme Court in the case of *Davis vs. Benson* (133 U.S. 333) to the effect that what led to the adoption of the First Amendment was "the oppressive measures adopted, and the cruelties and punishments inflicted by the governments of Europe for many ages, to compel parties to conform, in their religious beliefs and modes of worship, to the views of the most numerous sect" (*italics mine*).

It is argued that released time is a divisive measure, that it emphasizes differences instead of common factors and common loyalties, that it takes time that properly belongs to secular subjects, promotes bad feeling, and improperly uses taxpayers' money. On the other hand, the persons and agencies in favor of this program (such as the Depart-

ment of Religious Education of the Greater New York Federation of Churches) argue that religion has a claim on the time and attention of school children at least as legitimate as that of many subjects in the curriculum, that the state constitutional recognition of the diverse religious life of the community prevents any other practicable way of furnishing religious instruction to thousands of pupils, that it promotes good feeling and reduces "spiritual illiteracy." Such advocates consider it a step in the right direction, but a long way from the goal.

The released-time program has roots of one kind and another going back to the beginning of the public-school system. It has been operating in its present form for about twenty-five years. There were enrolled in it in New York City alone in June of 1946 over 110,000 public-school pupils. There ought to be available, therefore, for those who are interested in modern evidence as a basis for modern decisions, plenty of evidence on which to decide whether or not on the whole the released-time program is good or bad for the children of the public schools. And that is the precise question that should concern us in 1947.

I suggest the following long-range approach for consideration as a possible solution, not only for the released-time controversy, but also for the parochial-school problem—though I fully understand the difficulties in the way and the enormous change in attitude it would require.

1. No parochial schools of any kind to be conducted in the country—this by wholly voluntary arrangement, of course, not by government dictation. All the children now in the parochial schools of all denominations to be sent to public schools for instruction in the regular academic and vocational subjects.

2. Each parish, or other group, to have by state law the right to have all of their children, staggered in groups by grades from primary through senior high school, free from public school for one full half-day each week for attendance at the parish "institute" (let us call it that in order to give it a label

other than "school"). Each parish to employ its physical, financial, and personnel resources in the institute to teach religion, morality, manners, "marriage courses," and related subjects. Each parish further to have at the institute throughout the year—particularly in vacation periods—complete social and recreational programs. Each parish to make all of the services of the institute available to all the young people of the parish whether in school or not.

Among the unquestionable weaknesses of the present system, including both public and parochial schools (certainly often discussed but never cured so far as the Catholic schools are concerned), is the fact that too many parents shift to the schools the whole responsibility for both moral and religious training. Many schools do not function adequately on these matters at any time, do nothing at all during vacation periods, and can obviously do nothing for the thousands of adolescents and young people who are not in schools. There are many Catholics who believe that if the Church would place on the public schools the full burden of "regular" schooling, and spend the millions of dollars and the thousands of devoted lives now being spent in regular classrooms, in religious, moral, and social training for all of the Catholic youth, we would produce better Catholics and better citizens.

THE "bus cases," involving transportation of children to parochial schools as well as to public schools, have also been hotly argued in recent years. The February 10 decision of the Supreme Court will not end the debate. Attempts have been made here as elsewhere to foreclose discussion by calling on our non-existent principle. In a recent Kentucky case the Court of Appeals of that state upheld a state law which permitted the furnishing of transportation at public expense for children attending either public or parochial schools. Judge E. Poe Harris wrote:

"In this advanced and enlightened age, with all the progress that has been made in the field of humane and social legislation, and with the hazards and dangers of the

highway increased a thousand-fold from what they formerly were, it cannot be said with any reason or consistency that tax legislation to provide our school children with safe transportation is not tax legislation for a public purpose.

"Neither can it be said that such legislation, or such taxation, is in aid of a church, or of a private, sectarian or parochial school, nor that it is other than what it designs and purports to be, legislation for the health and safety of our children, the future citizens of our State.

"The fact that in a strained and technical sense the school might derive an indirect benefit from the enactment, is not sufficient to defeat the declared purpose and the practical and wholesome effect of the law."

PROBABLY the most far-reaching problem in our list is the last one—the question of federal aid to education, including aid to sectarian schools. The latest expression of this proposal is in the Aiken bill (S-199) in the present Congress. The subject has been argued pro and con many times. The opponents of federal aid to parochial schools have so far always won, and federal aid to education has always lost.

There have been two principal arguments against extending such aid to parochial schools. The chief of these in recent years has been the untenable position that the United States constitution forbade such aid. This contention has so far interfered with any full and fair debate on the merits of federal aid to education. I submit that it is time we had such a debate and time that the question be decided on the sole issue of the effect such aid would have on the children of America, and particularly the children of the backward and depressed areas and classes.

A secondary argument against federal aid to parochial schools has been that such aid would be a great hindrance to the proper development of the public schools and therefore very bad for the whole country. That

argument has merit and should be weighed.

My own opinion is that when all of the above is done, the weight of evidence will be in favor of federal aid without distinction on racial or religious lines to all schools that are training American children for citizenship in the United States. The main arguments for this program are: (1) No bill which does not provide for all schools is likely to become a law, so the total need is left unserved; (2) literacy, health, patriotism, knowledge of history, of the duties of citizenship, of the problems of humanity, are needed by all of the youth of the country without regard to race or creed or type of school attended; (3) when the United States calls upon the youth of the nation in time of war (and needs literate, healthy, intelligent men), it does not ask only for the boys from the public schools, but for those from all schools and, alas, even for those who have never had any schools that were worth calling schools; (4) the Negroes who would be large beneficiaries of such federal aid would probably fare better in many sections if the administration were in the hands of church rather than civil authorities.

These seem at the present time to be the five largest problems which we should free from the confusion caused by the invoking of a non-existent principle. But that will not solve the problems, and they must be solved. None of them were settled for us in 1791. I am confident that the proper answers can be found if difficulties are met honestly, realistically, in good temper, within the boundaries of both fact and law, with jealous respect for the rights, the beliefs, the hopes for their children, both as individual persons and as citizens, of the members of all the divergent groups in our complicated society. Only grave harm can come from violations of personal courtesy and civil liberties (the public aspect of personal courtesy). No possible good can come to either religion or education by continuing to rely upon incantation addressed to the ghost of an imaginary constitutional amendment.

FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

LABOR ORGANIZER: NEW STYLE

Pioneers of a Different Frontier

HARRY GERSH

BEHIND organized labor's rise to power in the 30's were vast economic movements and tides, government laws, and mass pressures. But, also, there were the organizers.

The organizers of the 30's were not, by and large, professionals. When section 7a of the National Industrial Recovery Act suddenly gave unions the signal for large-scale organization, the need overwhelmed their normal staffs. The call went out over the left-wing grapevine and organizers simply appeared. Members of a new kind of preaching fraternity, they were akin to missionaries; dedicants who thought of themselves as sacrificing ease and comfort and the promise of brilliant, worldly careers for their mission. (Some really did, most—quite humanly—liked to think they did.) And among them in significant number were Jews, whether more or less than there "should have been," I do not know. Jewish organizers as emissaries to *non-Jewish* workers were a new story and, in some sections of rock-ribbed New England and the reputedly even grimmer Deep South, strange apparitions—or at least so it was feared. As it turned out, they were not, nor were they, for the most part, so considered.

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As a matter of fact, the top leadership of the unions had little time in the early and middle 30's to worry about an organizer's Jewishness. The tide was at flood and men were needed to channel it. There was only one criterion: Could he do the job or could he be trained to do the job? Beyond that, no questions. There were other reasons also. The New Deal was a new and holy crusade. It went beyond economics. Its adherents and crusaders were deeply conscious of the basic American credos. What did a man's origin matter when they were choosing missionaries of the new gospel? Later, when the going got a little tougher, when the unions could afford the luxury of "statesmanship," then the problem of the Jewish organizer in the non-Jewish territory sometimes wrinkled leadership's brow.

One familiar stereotype of the Jewish organizer pictures him in the Peglerized manner: the swarthy, stocky, aggressive fellow with a ring on his little finger and clothes in the latest 42nd-Street fashion: the creases too sharp, the pattern too loud. He organizes by persuasion that sounds like threats, or by force, using both against workers and employers indiscriminately.

A second popular picture follows an older pattern. In this, the organizer appears as tall, cadaverous, ill-dressed, hatless. The bulging, misshapen pockets of his coat are filled with inflammatory literature. His cheeks are sunken and his eyes burn, recalling the Talmudic student with a passion for the Law and a poor *kest*. He organizes without regard for economic law, spouting worn, red phrases that inflame the listening workers.

Both pictures are untrue; the real "Jewish organizers"—or the organizers who are Jews

—are not even a synthesis of these types. There is no single prototype of the Jewish organizer, just as there is no composite non-Jewish organizer. On the other hand, the representative of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, AFL, rarely looks like the organizer for the Carpenters Brotherhood, AFL; and, admittedly, he is more nearly like the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' man, CIO, than the ACWA organizer resembles the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers' man, CIO.

FOR the past hundred years in American labor history, there have been paid representatives: organizers, business agents, walking delegates. Because of ability, ambition, rhetoric, or deep conviction, fellow workers were chosen by their fellow members out of the union ranks to take care of the business of the organization, generally involving hazardous, ill-paid jobs. Occasionally a radical intellectual would come to a union and offer help. This help was usually refused or, if accepted, it was suspect.

With the growth of unions among the Jewish needle-trades workers after 1880, some intellectuals did rise to leadership. But these were men whose academic education was from Europe and who had been forced into the sweatshops in America. To their shopmates they were fellow workers. There were exceptions to the rule, such as Benjamin Schlesinger, who moved into the leadership of the ILGWU from the manager's office of the Jewish *Daily Forward*. But most union officials came from the shops.

The intellectuals got their chance to offer their services to a suspicious labor movement after 1933, when Section 7a of the N.I.R.A., the Norris-LaGuardia Act, the Wagner Act, and sympathetic administrations gave specific legal sanction to unions and courage to the workers. The officials of the local organizations were competent at their jobs, but most of them were not fitted for organizing work in the field. When the CIO went out to organize steel, autos, rubber, and textiles, men who had spent most of their lives taking care of miners' locals and suit shops found themselves sent into strange areas to captain drives in strange trades. They were good, tough plan-makers, but they needed young, adaptable, quick-thinking organizers to execute their plans.

Both the AFL's and the CIO's need for organizers was met by a group of young men and women who came from the colleges, radical youth organizations like the Young Peoples' Socialist League, and even theological seminaries. (Communists came, too, but they had to go through a tortuous maze of peripheral organizations, their politics hidden, their names strangely Aryan. In fact, the appearance of a job-seeker who announced his name as Eric Lancaster or John Nelson Knight was taken as a sign that the comrades were trying to install a "plant." The progressive unions, the so-called left-wing Jewish unions—there were almost no Communist-controlled unions prior to 1935—were more conscious and more careful of Communist infiltration than were the other old-line AFL unions. They had painfully learned their lesson during the splitting attempts of the Communist party in the late 1920's.)

The new organizers were liberals and radicals, afire with the righteousness of their cause, swearing by such men as Eugene Victor Debs. Their education was superior to that of their leaders and employers, but they tried to belittle it. Coming out of school when the economic system appeared to have collapsed, they looked for jobs that didn't exist in factories that had been closed since 1930. Thirty dollars a week was a dream of affluent security, and the WPA salary for college graduates, twenty-one dollars, was a windfall. They looked for ways of becoming useful to their fellow men, for an outlet for their energies, for a means of showing revolt, for something to which to belong. They found all this in allegiance to the reborn labor movement.

THE job of organizer was perfect. Intellectually, it satisfied their economic and political views. Physically, it appealed to their desire to move about and to their natural gregariousness. Romantically, it was a dream, the kind of soldiering that was acceptable to the universal pacifism of the day.

The union jobs were not easy to get, but they were around. In many cases it was necessary to serve an apprenticeship as a volunteer in a big city organizing campaign. Leaflets had to be given out, picket signs carried, mimeograph machines turned. In some cities and with some unions, active

service with the Socialist party labor committee was sufficient recommendation. And, of course, labor leaders had sons, nephews, friends; that was a good way, too.

It was not long before the idea of the union movement as a career, a profession—in competition with the time-honored careers of doctor, dentist, lawyer—began to make itself felt. To be sure, while the union was romantic and intellectually satisfying, there was perhaps equal romance and satisfaction—and certainly more security—in the Hippocratic Oath, the bar, in education. But medicine and law required graduate study, money was hard to come by, and admission to professional and graduate schools perhaps harder, especially for Jews. And teaching positions were closed to newcomers because budgets were low. So many who in more normal years might have turned to other careers turned to the unions. Being a new idea, the notion of the labor movement as a profession was opposed by many of the old-timers among officials and by men in the shops, but the forward-looking top leadership welcomed the newcomers. They saw merit in a new kind of union functionary, a functionary with a trained mind and with access to the books and sciences used by the boss.

Jobs were easiest to get, for the newcomers, in the needle-trades unions, the ILGWU, the Amalgamated, etc. The history and traditions of these organizations, their close ties with radical parties, made them more acceptable. And their headquarters were in New York. After serving an apprenticeship in the needle-trades campaigns many organizers left for the great mass-production unions further west. During the height of the drives in steel and autos and textiles many captains were men who had got their first cards signed in a Pennsylvania shirt town or outside a runaway pants-shop in upper New York. The roster of ILGWU and Amalgamated organizers from 1933 to 1940 has on it many names now closely connected with a score of other national unions. The Jews among the organizers followed this path as well as the non-Jews. They went into radio and autos and steel and textiles. If there was any divergence from a general pattern, it might be in the number of Jews who came back to the New York-based unions for their steady, later-years jobs.

THE new organizer went into the field: the small towns of New England, the Middle Atlantic states, and the Midwest, wherever a factory boss ruled as a local patriarch, wherever a New York garment shop had migrated to take advantage of cheap labor. Some were hailed as deliverers, some were left strictly alone, some were beaten and jailed. Technically untrained in organizing, yet, as always with missionaries, not knowledge of the Book but their inward fire, brought converts. The long-term, cautious approach—getting a job in a factory, becoming known, finding friends and like-thinkers—was not possible. Factory jobs were scarce, and they didn't know the trade anyway. They had to attack from the outside.

Some unions planted one or two organizers in a town and let them work there until they organized the shop or were thrown out of town. Others, knowing that the secret of the strangers would soon get known anyway, boldly opened offices and announced that they were there to stay. In some cases the organizers moved about in crews of five or six, entered a town like a whirlwind, did their work in six weeks or so, and swept on to the next victim, leaving the technical details to the local director.

To many of the workers in these small towns—as against their more sophisticated brothers in the cities—a Jew was, by and large, a creature of legend, known only through by-words, curses, and stories. Of course, two Jews were known in these towns: one was the storekeeper, the other was the boss (the bosses of most garment shops were Jews). It would have been a simple shortcut for the organizers to ease their jobs by injecting a little anti-Semitism into their campaigns. It has happened. But to the new missionaries from the radical movements—even those who were not Jewish—this was an issue that had to be met squarely, and could not be glossed over or avoided.

Psychologically, even when the Jewish organizer could have hidden his Jewishness, he would not dream of denying it. For these unionists felt themselves not only builders of a dues-collecting machine, but teachers of a new way of life. That new way included political, social, and economic equality, and the confraternity of races. They

frankly admitted their Jewishness, while at the same time proclaiming their bond, not with their boss co-religionists, but with the Protestant, Roman Catholic, or Greek Catholic workers.

The myth of organized Jewdom—organized against all Christians—is one of the great plagues that beset the organizer. To argue against this recurrent and widespread fable often seemed specious and trivial, but it had to be done.

Once, in a mill town in Vermont, a newly-organized union was closing its meeting. Everything had gone well, and the organizer was using the period immediately after the meeting as an educational bull session. This time he had brought the conversation around to races. One of the men mentioned Jews. He was a good man, not young, highly respected, and a potential leader of the union.

"They're all organized," he said. "They got connections. They always take care of their own." He listed qualities that would be very welcome in the workers, but were only proof of conspiracy in the Jews.

The organizer, a Jew, drew him out. "How do you mean that, and how do you know that it is so? Where have you yourself seen it?"

"Well, if they break a law in this town they get away with it."

The organizer persisted: "What laws, any laws? Murder, robbery?"

"If they break a traffic law they never have to pay a fine; they get the ticket fixed."

Again the organizer tried to make it specific. "You mean any Jew?"

The townsman insisted, "Yes, any Jew."

The union man had to face it. "Do you mean that if I went through a red light I wouldn't have to pay any fine?"

The answer started fast but slowed immediately. "Why you're n. . ."

His face grew red. Realization came, and it was a shock. He was honestly embarrassed. He had seen a Jew face to face, had made great decisions with him, and not over the counter or across the barrier of the boss's desk.

THIS worker, in common with most, had never seen a Jew outside of certain usual "Jewish" trades. The idea that a Jew can honestly lead a union against a Jewish boss

comes hard to these people. It violates a pattern of thought so long accepted as to have assumed axiomatic truth. For even when the possibility of honest dealing is accepted verbally there is often a hidden suspicion.

For some workers, one of the ostensible "proofs" of this conspiracy of the Jews lay in the record of the Jewish communities during the depression. In most towns there were no Jews on the relief rolls. With communities small enough and average incomes high enough, those needing help could be taken care of by official Jewish charities or by unofficial grants from richer men. To Jews it appeared unseemly to allow any Jew to have recourse to public relief. Offhand, this seems a most commendable attitude. But to the workers of these towns, many of whom were on relief during the 30's, it was a mark of difference, a proof that Jews were solidly organized for their own welfare, and that this organization had inherent evil designs against Christendom. The organizer found these suspicions hard to answer. He could either say it wasn't so and repeat it often enough to hope for belief, or he could boast about the number of his friends who in the big cities did have to go on relief. The economic reasoning that would show that where there was a Jewish worker population the percentage of Jews on relief was as great as that of non-Jews was open to too many asides. The organizer who boldly said, "Well, it's a good thing to take care of your own," was both brave and rare.

In one Pennsylvania steel town with the usual Jewish community of shopkeepers, the workers were troubled by an abnormality: one Jew worked in the mill. One day, in conversation, someone said to him, "You must be a bad Jew."

It shocked him a bit at first. He knew that he didn't keep *Shabbas* and had violated the Passover, but what was that to them?

"Why do you say that?" he asked.

"Because you work in the mill. If you were a good Jew the other Jews would see to it that you had a store or some business like all the rest."

That answer had in it the whole mythology of the Jew as known to the small-town American. It is the answer that the organizer has to combat.

THE organizer's problems go beyond his relations with the workers he is trying to organize. Myth or no, he has to live, and that means seeing people, talking to them, having some social contacts outside of work. For the Jewish organizer it often meant seeking out the Jews, not necessarily for reasons of racial kinship or religious solace, but because social entry was easiest there. He could go to the Jewish center or to the synagogue and meet the people. He could talk to a Jewish storekeeper and find his way to the weekly pinochle game. Organizing is a lonely task, and finding people like the people back home who would accept him eased his loneliness.

If the union job is going to take months rather than weeks, the union expects the organizer to move his wife out with him. (Of course, many of the organizers were women.) In the early days of Wagner Act organizing, when many of the field men were "weekend" organizers—working hard during the week and rushing for the big city Friday afternoon—weekends stretched and the work week narrowed. So the unions urged moving the organizers' families to the scene. That made social contact with the townspeople even more necessary. The first and easiest contact was with the Jews. But, unfortunately, the Jews were not the workers in town.

In one fair-sized town in Western Massachusetts, the union had sent in a man to organize two garment shops, and his wife followed after a few weeks. When the social possibilities of the town library and movies were exhausted, they sought people to talk to. They had one contact in that town, a Jewish insurance man. He knew the garment workers through his business, and he knew the town's politics and people. Through him, and after a formal visit to the Jewish center, they were invited to the homes of the younger married couples of the Jewish community.

Ninety per cent or more of the 400 families in that close-knit community were in business, ranging from corner tailor and grocer shops to the local department store and garment factories. They were good people, and some were liberal, but they didn't want an organizer in their town, especially a Jewish organizer who might upset the precarious racial balance. It was part of

the union's plan that the boss have no knowledge of the early organizational work. So, for two reasons, the organizer and his wife were not introduced as such.

The union man's wife was invited to the weekly session of Mah Jongg. Politely, but with keen interest, she was asked, "And what does your husband do?"

Field organizers' wives are diplomats. This one answered disarmingly, "Oh, he's working at insurance with Mr. Levine." Mr. Levine was the insurance man. (After all, she could rationalize, he was an insurance man, trying to sell the garment workers insurance against wage cuts, unfair firing, etc.)

Another time it was impossible to use the insurance man story, and there was some double talk about labor and departments and laws. The townsman went away with the idea that he had been talking to a representative of the Federal Department of Labor.

Dissimulation wasn't pleasant, but the other choices were worse. They could hole up in their apartment and forego any contact with the only townspeople they could meet, or they could boldly state their business, endanger their mission, and still meet no one. A stranger Jew could either mingle with other Jews or spend months in loneliness. It's just tougher when the stranger is an organizer and the town Jews are factory owners.

THERE were also more dramatic patterns of relations with Jewish townsfolk. In one Maine town, where textile workers were out on strike, local Jewish dignitaries spoke to the man the union had sent in to run the strike—he was also Jewish—and delicately suggested that it would be very bad for Jews in that town if they were coupled with a destructive strike.

But in this case, and perhaps in others, the presence of the Jewish union man helped rather than hurt group relations. For when a Jewish-owned bus line began bringing in scabs, the anti-Semitic murmurs of the workers were stilled by the fact that their own leader was a Jew. Their false picture of reality, in which Jews and villains were equated, was corrected, at least to the extent of realizing that there were Jewish organizers as well as Jewish businessmen.

If the organizer hit a town in which the

owner was not Jewish, he was really in for it. It was always easy for the boss to raise the cry of "Jewish red." The fact that the organizer often was a conscious and intense anti-Communist didn't help. An organizer was a red per se, and if he was a Jew, the redness was twice compounded. The answer to this was hard work, sometimes dangerously hard work, for there was never enough time to change the thought processes of the community. First they had to be organized; after that an educational job might be done.

Relations with the church posed another major problem. In many communities, especially in the South, liberal churchmen fight a magnificent battle against anti-Semitism and starvation wages. This fight helps the organizer and the union. In the north many of the workers are Catholic. In New England, a majority are French, Polish, Irish, and Portuguese Catholics. Below the Hudson there are many East Europeans, members of the Greek Orthodox Church. A good organizer tries to enlist the support of the Roman or Greek priest or, if his support cannot be won, tries to get him to remain neutral. Catholic organizers find this comparatively easy. They can go to mass, speak to the priest as a communicant, start off with at least one point of contact, one evidence of likeness. The Jew cannot do this. If he shows too much interest in and friendliness for the church he is suspect. If he shows opposition he is hated. If the local priest speaks against him, he cannot even quote papal encyclicals or Father Haas and Bishop Sheil. They don't like Catholic quotations from his mouth. "The devil can quote Scripture. . . ." The best counter is to prime a good Catholic contact with the proper literature and leave it in the hands of a joint God.

Where the priest is with the organizer, the battle is half won. The organization of the stockyard workers and steel workers in the Chicago area was due, in part, to the great work of the Catholic clergy in the "Behind the Yards" movement. Other areas—Buffalo, for instance—benefited in the same way from the advanced social thinking of the Roman and Greek religious leaders. But in the early days there was no way of prejudging the reactions of the ministers and priests. It was a toss-up—and prayer didn't seem to help.

AS THE 30's ran out, the great organizing campaigns came to an end. Field organizers were still needed to clean up the small stuff, to keep up the constant attack upon the open shops, but the big outfits were in the union fold. The organizers started to think of the next step. They became practical. Wives were getting tired of living out of suitcases, and children began to appear. In the unions that had started from nothing, the auto workers, the textile workers, the steel workers, there was plenty of room at the top, and deserved promotions were granted. But in the unions with an established hierarchy, however fluid, there was little opportunity.

Some large industrial and commercial organizations headed by Jews are known to have Jewish quotas and even anti-Semitic hiring practices. A touch of this, with good rationalizations of course, can be found in some Jewish-headed unions. Not that they are against hiring Jews for the near-top jobs, but as for Jews in the field—suddenly they become conscious of the special problems. As organizer with several years of successful work in Pennsylvania or Connecticut would be told that it was easier for a Gentile to negotiate the contracts and manage the locals. The organizer, still a disciple of the new religion, still thinking of the spread of the new gospel, had to agree that it probably was easier for a Gentile. The officials in the national office became conscious of the values of "front." It was nice to have smart, college-trained assistants. It was nicer to have a smart, college-trained, Gentile assistant.

The normal promotional steps that the organizers expected to follow were: organizer, business agent, manager, area director, vice-president (no one seriously expected the presidency). Some of the boys started to climb, and some left for pursuits they would normally have followed but for the depression. Many went into the government as labor specialists. Many found another outlet: the specialist departments, the jobs as technical aides. And it is here, if one is interested in looking for Jews in the labor movement, that many of them are today. Except in the case of unions with large numbers of Jewish members, they are not union leaders, policy-makers, elected officials.

In the old AFL unions the national officers were staffed only by the elected officials

and the office help. There was an attorney on retainer, but he was used only for trouble. The business of the union was limited to getting raises and lower hours; economics was for the professors. The new unions of the CIO, politically progressive and dealing with stronger companies, found it useful to employ technicians: economists, research men, publicity directors, educators, industrial engineers. They found it useful because of their wider views of our economy and of their union's place in it, and because they visualized social goals beyond the imagination of the leadership of, say, the carpenters' union. Negotiating an agreement that might change the basic price of steel or textiles or oil is not the same as bargaining a raise out of a boss painter or a moving-picture theater owner.

Many of the organizers went into these new jobs happily. They saw fruitful careers ahead within the labor movement, careers that would make use of their earlier academic training plus their new knowledge of factories and workers. Some went back to college to get higher degrees with which to confound the employers' experts. The hated time-study man soon found that the union had men who could use a stop watch and slide rule as well as he, and to the workers' advantage. Publicity became important, and every union needed a practitioner of that black art.

These unions are democratic. Their leaders must stand for election at frequent intervals, and it is not always possible to come to the election convention with a new raise and a recently won strike. Demagoguery has to be kept out, and the union's stand on issues has to be explained to and understood by the membership. Here, too, is a new field: education—education in trade unionism and its traditions, education in economics and politics, and education in seemingly extraneous subjects that nevertheless help

bind the member closer to his organization.

Organizers with degrees in education became educational directors; organizers with engineering degrees went back to the slide rule and became management engineering experts; organizers who had known the city rooms of dailies became trade-union editors; and organizers who probably never should have left the analysis charts went back to the research stacks.

But still enough remain as organizers today, and enough young men and women out of college come into organizing from political conviction, to keep the old tradition and problems alive.

At the moment, the number of applicants for trade-union jobs, graduates not only of the New York and state universities but of the "ivy colleges," run far ahead of available openings. Union work has become one of the desirable professions among this college-bred Jewish generation.

TODAY the Jewish organizers are meeting their problems, half-licked and half-avoided in the North, in the South. The drive to lift the buying power and productive capacity of the Southern worker and to wipe out the low-wage competitive advantage of his employer is being fought bitterly. The Ku Klux Klan, under many new names, is being subsidized to fight the employers' battles, and its greatest weapon is the persistent xenophobia of the small town. The stranger is the enemy. If the stranger has some mark of strangeness upon him, in appearance, in speech, in name, then he is much more easily fought. Most of the organizers in the new drive are Southerners, and a few are Jewish, but the tag of Jew and red will be put upon them all. They will have to meet this problem with the same ingenuity and the same counterattacks they used in the North, and with new ones. But they'll meet it. They always have.

CEDARS OF LEBANON

AN ARISTOCRACY OF LEARNING

Jewish Life in 17th-Century Poland

NATHAN NATA HANNOVER

THIS vivid description of Jewish life in Poland in the 17th century is the final chapter of a book called *Yeven Metzula* (The Pit of Corruption) written by Rabbi Nathan Nata Hannover and published in Venice in 1653. The bulk of the volume is an account of the Ukrainian uprising against Poland under the Cossack leader Bogdan Chmielnicki in 1648 and of the mass slaughter of Jews perpetrated by the Ukrainians in the course of their struggle.

Rabbi Hannover was a Cabalist, not a historian, yet the simplicity of his exposition, which often appears to border on naïveté, proves more effective than a scholarly historical work. His perception and sensitivity triumphed where mechanically objective observation falls short. His simple declarative sentences, couched in the style of his day, reveal such a penetrating understanding that in them we can still recognize the Poles, Ukrainians, and Jews of today. Graetz and Dubnow valued Rabbi Hannover's book highly as a historical source book, while the Jewish masses in Eastern Europe made it recommended reading during the mourning period preceding the fast day of the ninth of Ab.

The Chmielnicki pogroms shook the Jewish people to its very foundation; and from the mood of despair that followed upon them, the Messianic Sabbatai Zevi movement derived much of its strength. Many Jews must have felt indeed that the world—their world—was coming to an end. Probably such a feeling induced Rabbi Hannover to add this chapter to

his book, so that future generations might know how the Jews of Poland had lived.

The picture emerging from this chapter has the charm of a folk tale. The minute details of Jewish life, surrounded as it was by a vast feudal sea of primitive peasantry and arrogant nobility, lend verisimilitude to it. We obtain the image of a highly complicated civilization carried on by a tightly knit group in the midst of a cultural void. There was the extreme, exaggerated dedication to learning, the mutual responsibility, and then there was that furious determination to *live*—all for the sake of some sacred, mysterious end, no doubt.

The world of Polish Jewry, which appeared on the point of obliteration in 1648, succeeded in recuperating from the Chmielnicki uprising, and survived for almost three centuries more. The chapter below has more than a historical interest today, for in addition to erecting a memorial to a community and a way of life now permanently destroyed, it still involves us directly. In the author's description of the aid extended by Jewish communities to the DP's of 1650, we recognize the Jewish solidarity of today. Nor is the hunger for learning in the yeshivot of 17th-century Poland substantially different from the thirst contemporary Jews feel for university education. Unwittingly, perhaps, Rabbi Nathan Nata Hannover described a historical pattern of respect for learning that we continue weaving in the present.

The translation is by myself.—SHLOMO KATZ.

IT IS said in Tractate *Aboth*: "Simon the Just was one of the last survivors of the Great Assembly. He used to say: Upon three things is the world based: upon the

Torah, upon divine service, and upon the practice of charity. Rabban Simeon, the son of Gamaliel, said: By three things is the world preserved: by truth, by judgment, and

by peace." All these six pillars upon which the world is based were in existence in the Kingdom of Poland.

The pillar of the Torah: Matters that are widely known need not be proved, for throughout the dispersions of Israel there was never so much learning as in the Kingdom of Poland. There each and every community maintained yeshivot, and they lavished great compensation on the master of each yeshiva that he might maintain his yeshiva without worry and that the Torah might be his trade. And the master of the yeshiva would not leave his house the entire year except to go to the house of prayer or the house of study, and he was engaged day and night in the study of the Torah. Furthermore each community maintained young men and provided them with a weekly allotment of money that they might study with the master of the yeshiva, and for each young man they also maintained at least two boys who should study under his supervision so that he should orally explain the *Gemara*, *Rashi*, and *Tosafot* [the Talmud and its exegeses and commentaries] which he had learned, and thus they should become adept at argumentation.

The boys were provided with food from community funds or public kitchens. A community of fifty households maintained not less than thirty young men and boys, and one young man and his two pupils would be in the same household, and the young man at least sat at table as one of the sons. And although the young man had an allotment from the community, his host provided him with food and drink as he needed. Some of the more generous householders also permitted the boys to eat at their tables, thus providing food and drink to three persons the entire year.

And there was scarcely a house in all the Kingdom of Poland where they did not engage in the study of the Torah: either the head of the household was a scholar, or his son, or his son-in-law, or a young man eating at the table, and at times all of these were in the same house. Thus they realized the three things which Rava listed in the Tractate *Shabbat*, Chapter I: "Rava said he who loves scholars will have scholarly sons; he who honors scholars will have scholarly sons-in-law; he who fears scholars will be

himself a scholar." Thus it came about that there were many learned men in each community and if there was a community of fifty householders it contained twenty scholars who were called *morenu* [our master] or *haver* [friend]. [These were honorary titles accorded by the rabbi to scholarly members of his congregation. Communal regulations defined the conditions to be met in order to obtain such titles.] The master of the yeshiva was over all these and the scholars were obedient toward him and went to hear his discourses at the yeshiva.

AND this was the order of study in the Kingdom of Poland: the term of study was that time during which the young men and the boys had to study with the master of the yeshiva. In the summer it extended from the first day of the month of Iyar till the fifteenth day of the month of Ab; in the winter from the first of the month of Heshvan till the fifteenth day of Shevat. After the fifteenth of Shevat or the fifteenth of Ab the young men and the boys were free to study wherever they chose. From the first day of Iyar till the feast of Pentecost, and in the winter from the first day of Heshvan till Hanukah, all the students at the yeshiva studied *Gemara*, *Rashi*, and *Tosafot* with great diligence. Each day they studied a *halachah*—a page of *Gemara* with its commentaries was called a *halachah*.

All the scholars and young men of the community and anyone with a penchant for learning would go to the yeshiva. The master of the yeshiva alone would be seated in a chair and all the others stood about him. They would dispute with each other in matters of Law before the master of the yeshiva arrived, and when he came each would ask him that which he had found difficult in the Law and he would answer their questions. Then they were all silent and the master of the yeshiva discoursed about his new interpretations of the Law, and after he had stated his innovations the master of the yeshiva would state a contradiction, i.e., he would cite from the *Gemara* or *Rashi* or *Tosafot* things that are contradictory, he would question abbreviations and provide answers which might also be contradictory; thus he would find answers until the Law emerged clearly.

In the summer they would not leave the

yeshiva earlier than noon. From the feast of Pentecost till the New Year, and from Hanukah till Passover, the master of the yeshiva would not engage in so many disputatious subjects, but taught the scholars *Arba'ah Turim* [a collection of laws compiled by Rabbi Jacob ben Rabbi Asher]; the young men he taught *Rav Alfasi* [the compilation of laws by Rabbi Yitzchak Alfasi] and other works. In any case they also studied *Gemara*, *Rashi*, and *Tosafot* till the first day of Ab or the fifteenth day of Shevat. From then on until Passover or the New Year they studied solely compilations of Law and other works.

Some weeks before the fifteenth day of Ab or the fifteenth day of Shevat the master of the yeshiva would honor each one of his students by allowing him to conduct the discourses in the yeshiva in his stead; both scholars and young men were thus honored. They would hold forth and the master of the yeshiva disputed with them so that they should sharpen their wits.

Thus they studied the same tractate throughout the Kingdom of Poland in sequence through the six orders [of the *Mishna*]. And each master of a yeshiva had one attendant who went daily to all the schools to look after the boys, both rich and poor, that they should study; and he would warn them every day in the week that they should study and not roam the streets. On Thursdays all the boys had to go in a group to the director in charge of the Talmud Torahs who questioned them on what they had learned during the week, and he who knew nothing of what he had studied or made one error was flogged by the attendant at the order of the director and was otherwise chastised before the other boys so that he should remember and study more diligently the following week. Likewise on the eve of Sabbath all the boys went in a group to the master of the yeshiva, who questioned them on what they had learned during the week. In this manner there was a great fear upon the boys and they studied with diligence.

Also during the three days before Pentecost and during Hanukah the young men and the boys reviewed what they had studied during the term, and the heads of the community gave them allotted gifts of money. Such was the custom till the fifteenth

day of Ab or the fifteenth day of Shevat. After that the master of the yeshiva, together with all his pupils, young men and boys, traveled to the fair.

IN THE summer they traveled to the fairs in Zaslav and Jerislav; in the winter to the fairs in Lvov and Lublin. There the young men and boys were free to study in any yeshiva they chose. And at each fair there were some hundreds of masters of yeshivot, some thousands of young men, tens of thousands of boys and Jewish merchants, and Gentiles like the sands on the shore of the sea, for people would come to the fair from one end of the world to the other. And whoever had a son or a daughter to marry off went to the fair and there chose a match, for there everyone found his like and his mate. And there would be hundreds of matches made at each fair, and sometimes thousands. Jews, men as well as women, went about the fair dressed in royal garments, for they were held in esteem by the rulers and by the Gentiles, and the children of Israel were numerous as the sands of the sea, but now, because of our sins, they have become few, may the Lord have mercy upon them.

And great honor was accorded to the master of the yeshiva in each community, and his words were heard by rich and poor alike, none gainsaid him, without him no man raised his hand or foot, and as he commanded thus it came to be. In his hand he carried a stick and lash to flog and to punish and to chastise transgressors; it was his to formulate regulations, establish safeguards and declare the forbidden. Nevertheless the master of the yeshiva was loved and one who had a good portion such as fatted fowl or good fish would honor the master of the yeshiva with half or all of these, and with other gifts of money or silver and gold without measure. In the synagogue, too, most of those who bought honors shared them with the master of the yeshiva, who was called up at least third to the reading of the Torah on Sabbaths and the first day of the holidays. And if the master of the yeshiva was a Kohan or a Levite, the honors that belong to these were accorded to him, despite the fact that there may have been many other Kohanim or Levites in the congregation. And no

man walked out of the synagogue on Sabbaths or holidays until the master of the yeshiva went out first and his pupils after him, then the whole congregation accompanied him to his home. On holidays the entire congregation went to his home to greet him. For this reason all scholars were envious and studied diligently that they, too, might reach this state and become masters of yeshivot in some community, and through study for extraneous motives they came to study the Torah for its own sake, and the land was filled with knowledge.

The pillar of Service: At this time prayer took the place of service, as it is written "so will we render the calves of our lips." Prayer was founded on bases of gold and at the head was the society of those who rise before dawn, "They that watch for the morning," to pray and to mourn over the destruction of the Temple. With dawn would arise the members of the Psalms Society who recited Psalms for about an hour before prayers, and each week they would recite the entire Book of Psalms. And God forbid that any man should oversleep the time of prayer except under great compulsion. And when a man went to the synagogue he would not depart thence to his business until he had heard some learned words from a scholar, or a passage from the commentaries of *Rashi* on the Torah, the Prophets, the Scriptures, the *Mishna*, or some laws, whatever his heart desired to study; for in all synagogues there were groups of scholars who taught others in the synagogue immediately after morning and evening prayers in order to observe: "They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God."

The pillar of Charity: There was no measure to the benevolence in the Kingdom of Poland, especially in hospitality. If a scholar or preacher came to visit a community, even if it was one where visitors were given slips entitling them to be the guests of a householder, he did not have to humiliate himself to obtain a slip, but went to some leader in the community and stayed wherever he chose. The beadle then came and took his permit to collect money and showed it to the head of the synagogue or the leader of the community for the month

[leaders of the community served in turn for three months or for one month] and they gave him a fitting gift and respectfully sent him with the beadle. He was then the guest of one of the householders for as many days as he chose. Similarly with other strangers who received slips. He would be given a slip and be the guest of the householder whose turn it was for as long as he wanted.

At the very least a slip was good for three days, and the guest was provided with food and drink, morning, noon, and night. And when they wanted to go on their way they were given provisions for the way and were sent by horse and carriage from one community to another. If young men or boys, men or unmarried girls came from afar, they would forthwith be provided with clothes and he who wanted to work at a trade would be apprenticed to a tradesman, and he who wanted to be a servant would be given into a house to serve, and for him who wanted to study a teacher would be hired, and afterward, when he became an important young man, a rich man would take him into his home and marry his daughter to him, and give him several thousand gulden for a dowry and dress him in royal garments—for who is royalty? Scholars. After the wedding he would be sent away from home to study in the great yeshivot. And when he returned home after two or three years his father-in-law would maintain a yeshiva for him in his home and spend much money among householders who were great scholars that they should go to his yeshiva for some years until the son-in-law, too, became the master of a yeshiva in some community.

And even if the young man was not yet an important student at the time but had a good heart for study and there was a possibility that he would become a scholar after he had studied, there would at times come a rich man who had a small daughter and give him food and drink and clothes and all his needs, as to his own son, and hire a teacher for him until he became a polished vessel; then he would give him his daughter; and there is no greater benevolence than this. Similarly there were very beautiful regulations for poor unmarried girls in the entire kingdom, and no poor girl reached the age of eighteen without

being married, and many pious women devoted themselves to this good deed, may the Lord recompense them and have mercy on the remnant of Israel.

The pillar of the Law: This was in the Kingdom of Poland as it was in Jerusalem before the destruction of the Temple, when they set up courts in every city, and if one did not wish to be judged by the court in his city he went to the nearest court, and if he did not wish to be judged by the nearest court he went before the great court. For in every province there was a great court. Thus there was a great court for Volhynia and the Ukraine in the community of Ostra, which was the capital, and in the community of Lvov there was a great court for Russia. Thus there were many great communities, each of which had a great court for its province.

And if two chief communities had a dispute among themselves they would go before the leaders of the Four Lands, may their Rock and Redeemer preserve them. These would be in session together twice a year. One leader was chosen from each of the chief communities and to them were added six *gaonim* [recognized great men] from Poland, and all together were called [the Committee of] the Four Lands.

They would be in session at each fair in Lublin between Purim and Passover and at each fair in Yaroslav in the month of Ab or Elul. The leaders of the Four Lands were like the Sanhedrin in the Chamber of Hewn Stones and they had authority to judge all Israel in the Kingdom of Poland, to establish safeguards and to formulate regulations and to punish each man as they saw fit. Each difficult matter was brought before them and they judged it. And the leaders of the Four Lands chose judges from the provinces to lighten their burden and these were called Judges of the Provinces before whom all cases involving money were brought. But matters pertaining to fines, ownership, and other difficult laws were brought before the leaders of the Four Lands, may their Rock and Redeemer preserve them. Nor was a dispute inside Israel ever brought before a Gentile court or before a lord or before the king, God magnify his glory, and if a man of Israel took his case before Gentile judges he was punished

with great reproach, to observe "even our enemies themselves being judges."

The pillar of Truth: There were in every community men appointed over weights and measures and other mutual dealings to see to it that everything was conducted according to truth and justice.

The pillar of Peace: For it is said "The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace." And there was in Poland so much learning that no three people sat down to a meal but that they discussed the Torah, for everyone, all the time that they were eating, debated matters of Law and *Midrashim* that were not clear, in order to observe "thy law is within my heart." And the Lord, blessed be His name, recompensed them so that even when they were in the land of their enemies He did not despise them nor did he break His covenant with them, and wherever their feet trod the ground among our brothers the House of Israel, they were treated with great charity. Above all was this the case with our brothers who were in trouble and in captivity among the Tartars, for the Tartars led them to Constantinople, a city that was a mother in Israel, and to famed Salonika and to other communities in Turkey and to Egypt and to the Berber countries and other provinces of the Jewish dispersion, where they were ransomed for much money. To this day they have not ceased ransoming the prisoners that are brought to them each day, the Lord recompense them.

And those who fled the sword of the foe, wherever their footsteps led them, to Moravia, to Austria, to Bohemia, to Germany, to Italy, were met with kindness and were given food and drink and lodging and garments and many gifts to each according to his importance, and they also did other favors to them. Especially in Germany did they do more than they could, may their justice appear before God to defend them and all Israel so that Israel may enjoy peace and rest in his dwellings, and may their merit be counted for us and our children that God should hearken to our cries and gather our dispersion from the four corners of the earth and send to us our just Messiah soon, in our day, Amen Selah!

THE STUDY OF MAN

THE DARK GROUND OF PREJUDICE

Discussing Some Psychological Factors

BOOKS on race prejudice and anti-Semitism have shown a significant shift in the past few years: the emphasis is no longer on the history of anti-Semitism, an emphasis which perforce implied that understanding anti-Semitism was a matter of discovering and appraising various historical, economic, and social factors; it has become increasingly focused on its deeper "irrational"—or emotional—roots in the psychology of the human personality. The anti-Semitism of the late 19th and early 20th century has thus been traditionally explained as a political phenomenon; the anti-Semitism of today is studied as a mass neurosis.

Anti-Semitism and other forms of race prejudice, as mass neuroses, offer a perplexing challenge to modern social scientists. They seem a permanent and highly persistent part of modern society, hardly affected by good times or bad; they seem to represent an inner compulsion of the prejudiced, which makes them impervious to the onslaughts of reason; their wide reach, in space and time, indicates that the need they serve is not primarily the relatively temporary one of political expediency (though of course race prejudice is constantly used for reactionary political ends) or perhaps even of economic advantage (though, again, there are often obvious economic advantages at stake). The characteristics of modern race prejudice would seem to point to some deep-seated disturbance in society, from which prejudice

offers many people, in most countries and in practically all strata of the population, a ready escape.

In this month's "Study of Man," two well-known social scientists look at a number of books on anti-Semitism and race prejudice and suggest the lesions in modern society from which race prejudice arises. ARNOLD M. ROSE is Professor of Sociology at Bennington College. He is best known for his collaboration with Gunnar Myrdal on the latter's monumental study of the Negro in America, *An American Dilemma*. SIEGFRIED KRACAUER has written a study of the German middle class, a biography of Offenbach, *Orpheus in Paris*, and most recently, a comprehensive history of the German film, *From Caligari to Hitler*. Their analyses, written independently and from somewhat different points of view—Professor Rose is primarily a sociologist, Dr. Kracauer a social psychologist—converge remarkably on similar facets of modern society: in brief, Professor Rose points to urbanization, Dr. Kracauer to an inner revolt from over-rationality. These aspects of our modern society are so all-pervasive that most people are probably not aware of them; yet the victory of both urbanization and rationality is so recent and sudden, in the perspective of human history, that they may well have highly damaging effects on the individuals subjected to them, of which modern race prejudice is one.—ED.

The Neurosis of Urbanization

ARNOLD M. ROSE

THE two volumes, *Essays on Antisemitism* (edited by Koppel S. Pinson, New York, Conference on Jewish Relations, 1946) and *Anti-Semitism, A Social Disease* (edited by Ernst Simmel, New York, International Universities Press, 1946), together representing the efforts of twenty-two authors to throw new light on anti-Semitism, are written

from two distinct and contrasting orientations. The first volume consists largely of historical descriptions of anti-Semitism, as it has manifested itself in ancient, medieval, and modern times. Except for some brief "analytical studies" it is largely factual, with little interpretation or point of view, and by and large represents familiar approaches to the problem. The book edited by Dr. Simmel is largely theoretical, dominated by psychoanalytic points of view, and highly original. It includes two

empirical studies—on the anti-Semitic personality and on fascist propaganda in this country—but the remaining chapters are solely interpretations of anti-Semitism in psychological terms.

Here are two books on anti-Semitism so different from each other that a reader unfamiliar with the subject would not know that he was reading on the same subject if a few key words were camouflaged. The historians either limit themselves to a presentation of bare facts, or when they attempt analysis they have no theory to aid them and thus tend to fall back on platitudes. The psychologists, on the other hand, often spin their theories in ethereal realms so far removed from the facts of everyday life and so oblivious of economic, political, and other social forces that they come out with something that may or may not be true, but which is difficult or impossible to test.

Fortunately, both these books provide a few exceptions to the above criticisms. Dr. Hannah Arendt has written an analysis of anti-Semitism in France of the Third Republic that could provide a model for the historian of any subject. Not only does she offer complete and well-documented facts, but she draws out their full significance. We learn that the monarchists, the army leaders, and the higher Catholic clergy each used anti-Semitism to gain power for themselves at the expense of the Republic. We learn that the French Jews had so forgotten self-respect that their greatest ambition was to get invited to an anti-Semitic salon. The Dreyfus affair was not a struggle between anti-Semites and Jews, but between democrats and anti-democrats. The socialists were so blinded by Marxian dogma that they could not see the Dreyfus affair as an attack on democracy but only as a petty struggle between two groups of the upper class. Anti-Semitism is seen in its entire framework of social forces and events, and even leading personalities are related to it. We come away with a clearer understanding of why there was anti-Semitism in France, and what its consequences were.

The other historical essays in the Pinson book—covering anti-Semitism in the Graeco-Roman world, early and medieval Christian periods, Islam, Czarist Russia, Poland, and contemporary Germany—are interesting for their facts, but they add little to analysis beyond forcing us to recognize that anti-Semitism is very deep in our culture and subject to diverse manifestations. Only very occasionally

is there reference to what goes on in the minds of the anti-Semites: Dr. Solomon Grayzel, for example, brings out the fact that the survival of the Jews in the face of adversity caused Christians to develop the theory that Jews must exist to prove by their ultimate conversion the complete triumph of the Church, but must not enjoy their life in order to demonstrate that happiness depends on the acceptance of Christianity. Professor Z. Diesendruck finds the attempt to explain anti-Semitism so hopeless that he assures us that it cannot be stopped, and all the Jews can do is to develop "inner defenses." Professor Jacob Marcus, however, suggests some ways of attacking anti-Semitism. Professor Waldemar Gurian and Professor Pinson point out some significant recent changes in anti-Semitism: the Catholic Church is no longer leading in the persecution of Jews, but, like many Protestant leaders, fights against anti-Semitism; anti-Semitism has become associated with disappointment with the progressive democratic order rather than with corrupt reactionaries as it was before World War I; during World War II anti-Semitism became associated with the Nazis.

THE basic question of the Simmel book is formulated by Professor Gordon Allport in his cautious preface: "To what extent is prejudice due to dark unconscious forces of which the individual is unaware and for which he is not responsible?" In this book, anti-Semitism is located in the individual, and yet the individual is absolved from any control over it. Although verbal reservations are made about anti-Semitism being a social problem, it is regarded as fundamentally an individual neurosis. The research report of Drs. Frenkel-Brunswik and Sanford represents the most careful delving into the characteristics of this anti-Semitic personality. The anti-Semite is addicted to automatic and unreasoning support of the status quo (yet Professor Gurian holds that the Nazis were revolutionary); he is against other minority groups besides the Jews; he has exaggerated moral strictness in such form as to suggest inhibition of tendencies in the opposite direction (the down-at-heel characters who organize for anti-Semitism don't seem to bother about morals, however); he does not engage in self-analysis but rigidly adheres to conventional standards; he feels insecure even when his income is high. It is very valuable to have the anti-Semite thus concretely nailed down

for us by careful study, but the scientist must ask whether the findings may not apply only to the types of female college students available for the study. The historian of anti-Semitism, in the United States, France, Germany, Russia, Poland, would not find that the description holds for the more outstanding examples of anti-Semitism that he knows. Anti-Semitism is found among too many kinds of people for one to talk of *the* anti-Semitic personality.

The research report by Dr. Adorno deals with the characteristics of fascist agitation on the West Coast of the United States. In general, this agitation is found to be a clever playing upon the unconscious mechanisms of average people. The agitators are very personal—they talk about themselves and they appear to take a warm human interest in their listeners. They describe their wonderful movement but are very vague about the specific goals. People are taken into confidence and told a lot of inside "dirt," with innuendo, that satisfies their wishes to learn of the mysterious unknown and to belong to something. Stereotypes are built up so that people can be all for them or all against them, not with mixed attitudes as toward real objects. The agitators express themselves volubly, with all sorts of antics—as their listeners would like to do if they were not so inhibited. In this study we get a closer picture of the anti-Semitic agitator and we come to the question of the appeals which anti-Semitism has for people. We are not told, however, what effect the various devices of agitation have on the average man.

Although followers of Freud, the authors of *Anti-Semitism, A Social Disease* do not use Freud's own bizarre theory of anti-Semitism as fear of circumcision and rejection of those who refuse to acknowledge the murder of their father-god, Moses. Rather the authors develop their own theories based on psychological mechanisms first described by Freud. Dr. Simmel considers anti-Semitism "a psychopathological personality disturbance, manifesting a regression to the . . . stage of the development of the ego when hatred, the predecessor of the capacity to love, governed its environmental relationships." Dr. Simmel does, however, extend this purely individual approach and analyzes historical facts. In doing so, he develops a most brilliant analysis of anti-Semitism as a mass delusion, as an excuse for having desires and envies which the anti-Semite does not want to admit to himself.

For the late Dr. Fenichel, the anti-Semite arrives at his hate of the Jews by a process of displacement. He hates his own instincts—the lust to kill, the love of dirt, and low voluptuousness—and the social repression of them, and so he projects them on the Jews. This he can do because the Jews seem strange and foreign, having a culture of their own. Fenichel has to stretch many a fact to make this formula come out; his analysis would seem to apply better to German anti-Semitism than to the kind found in the United States.

THE combination of finding significant historical and social facts, with a courageous use of the imagination and powers of generalization, seems to be a more fruitful approach than either used alone. Dr. Arendt and Dr. Simmel, and to a certain extent Dr. Adorno and Professor Gurian, use this felicitous combination, and therefore—despite differences in subject matter and point of view—have something in common in their analyses of anti-Semitism's appeal for the mass. They find that anti-Semitism occurs when people are losing their higher ideals and impersonal values, and therefore are willing to, and find a need to, give play to their most selfish motives.

Dr. Simmel puts anti-Semitism in terms of the disappearance of love and reversion to primitive hate. Dr. Arendt puts it in terms of loss of respect for civil liberties and reversion to the appeal of the mob. Certainly modern anti-Semitism is associated with the uprooting of people from the direct associations which gave meaning to their lives: the weakening of religion does weaken people's conception of life's ends, the substitution of assembly-line production for craft-production does reduce people's attachment to their occupation, the growth of national government functions at the expense of local government functions makes people feel that government is a force independent of them, and so on. This uprooting process—which sociologists term urbanization, because it is caused by the rise of the factory system and the cities which they necessitate—causes people to feel insecure, to have fear of unknown and uncontrollable forces that seem to move them. When people feel, and are buffeted by, these large and impersonal forces—of government, huge corporations, advertising, etc.—they are transformed into a mass. Their fear is likely to take the form of anti-Semitism, along with other manifestations, because Jews

are a symbol of the urbanization which they hate. The way out of this mass neurosis is to revert to a pre-urban existence—undesirable and impractical from many standpoints—or to develop such substitute satisfactions as having faith in democracy and other higher ideals and values. The strengthening of impersonal values and goals in our society would help to get us away from individual self-centeredness, which Dr. Simmel is disturbed about, and would create a more solid basis for democratic group organization, which Dr. Arendt thinks is most needed.

The Revolt Against Rationality

SIEGFRIED KRACAUER

THE sizable number of recent volumes presenting in popular form analyses of race prejudice and suggestions for dispelling it indicate the wide diffusion and acceptance of both a standard analysis and a standard therapy for race prejudice. Let us look briefly at three of these books and their prescriptions.

Mr. George de Huszar, in the *Anatomy of Racial Intolerance* (New York, H. W. Wilson, 1946), has made an intelligent compilation of excerpts from magazine articles, research papers, and books, mostly written during the war and reflecting the apprehension then current of a rise in intolerance during the reconversion period. Dr. Dorothy W. Baruch, a trained psychologist, elaborates in the *Glass House of Prejudice* (New York, William Morrow, 1946) upon individual conflicts and group incidents, giving well-authenticated case histories that effectively support her arguments and suggestions. Miss Margaret Halsey (*Color Blind: A White Woman Looks at the Negro*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1946) confines herself to drawing on her wartime experiences in an interracial canteen.

In his eagerness for complete documentation Mr. de Huszar occasionally includes less nourishing material: specimens of arid formalism and flights into lofty regions where the assumption of an "economy of abundance" is made effortlessly. But the main body of his compilation consists, fortunately, of such substantial articles as Gordon W. Allport's analysis of bigotry in our midst; Edwin R. Embree's war survey, "Race Relations Balance Sheet"; Clyde R. Miller's presentation of the Springfield Plan;

and a short piece by Horace M. Kallen that reveals the structure of democracy with a true sense of its inner workings. Here and there a less orthodox observation juts out of the rather familiar surroundings. Thus Robert Redfield infers from events in Russia that a social revolution may well do away with seemingly immovable racial prejudices.

Dorothy W. Baruch deals extensively with Mexican minority problems in California, covering ground not yet fully explored. A whole chapter is devoted to the zoot-suit riots of 1944. The book, with its emphasis on psychological readjustment, breathes a warmth that would be more effective did not Dr. Baruch repeatedly try to convince hesitant readers with rhetorical flourishes. Students of race bias will appreciate the appendix with its many references and supplementary materials.

Margaret Halsey is not a well-intentioned psychologist but a bright and sensitive woman. The way she supervised the junior hostesses in her war canteen, straightened out tangled situations and worked upon the more mildly prejudiced white servicemen while leaving the unteachable alone—all this testifies to maturity combined with tactical skill. It is true that Miss Halsey does not always avoid jumping to conclusions, but she shows that she understands Southerners and their piled-up inhibitions, and she debunks current legends about Negroes with incisive sarcasm, rightly emphasizing the role sexual jealousy and social frustration play as motives of discrimination.

All three books prove that psychiatry has made inroads in modern thinking. Many authors now dwell upon the lasting effects of early environment and explain stereotyped prejudices as the result of deep-rooted childhood impressions. The emotional consequences of economic insecurity are given no less attention; it seems to be common knowledge that such insecurities touch off certain psychological mechanisms, and it is taken for granted that the all-but-automatic release of these mechanisms accounts for the persecution of minority groups by harassed majorities. Hence educational measures are recommended—adequate child-training, schools cultivating interracial relations, group organizations for the reorientation of adults, and so on.

This whole literature is symptomatic of an almost mystic belief in the potentialities of social psychotherapy—particularly in Dr. Baruch's case. And who would deny the bene-

ficient effects of psychotherapy? But its devotees as a rule overrate what can be achieved in this field, for they fail to acknowledge one powerful motive of racial bias in our time—a motive that despite its partly psychological origins proves inaccessible to the intervention of psychologists.

IT is a motive related to a society that, like our modern one, seems unable to provide powerful cultural incentives for the total human being. Dr. Max Horkheimer, one of our foremost thinkers, attributes the actual lack of such incentives to the contemporary "deterioration of reason." With the development of abstract thinking and technical proficiency, reason itself has become increasingly denaturalized. What this means can be grasped by comparing our present civilization with a past in which all reasoning involved the universe both within and outside us. Not yet emancipated from tradition and creed, reason then embraced the angelic and devilish components of nature with an acute awareness of their significance, incorporating them in a substantial, multi-faceted pattern of existence. Set against the background of such relative completeness, contemporary society appears strangely incoherent and empty.

Our society is governed by formal reason, under whose rule we have learned to control nature at the cost of sympathetic contact with its inherent urges and goals. The tissues connecting thought and matter, image and object, have withered away. Values are labels, mass culture takes the place of culture, and ideas degenerate into slogans that may affect people but fail to get under their skins. The realm of reason has become a sham reality filled with oversized vistas, unsubstantiated notions, and the bizarre shadows of things existent. Chirico's paintings reflect the *horror vacui* haunting any mind with a memory in this No Man's Land.

Abandoned by denaturalized reason, nature appears as something incomprehensible, if not hostile, something that should be eliminated rather than admitted. It not only appears this way: exactly as oppressed minorities become more and more debased, so nature disintegrates in the wake of our alienation from it. A deep gap grows between the rational and the elemental in us. . . .

In his present enlightened state of mind, civilized man, not without infinite malaise,

identifies the unceasing manifestations of race hatred and crude violence as relapses into that jungle region which he thought to have long since left behind. No doubt, these manifestations are relapses. But what from an enlightened point of view seems retrogression at its worst can also be considered a reaction against the emasculating effects of present-day reason.

The upsurge of primitive instincts in our society owes much to an irresistible, if unavowed, desire to re-establish the right of nature. Modern man derives a remarkable satisfaction from the shaking off of all controls. Savagery both scares and fascinates him as something that may enable him to attain a great fullness of being. Thus it should not be overlooked that the persistence of blind prejudice may still include an element of legitimate revolt. Prejudice has been called a disease, but spreading like an epidemic, it bares the disease of civilization itself.

Psychologists concerned with rehabilitating the maladjusted endorse, of necessity, rational behavior as something desirable. They restore and consolidate the rule of reason. And yet it is reason itself that, because of its denaturalized, anemic condition, calls forth the protests of neglected nature. To be sure, this does not prevent psychotherapy from removing prejudice in individual cases, but even those practitioners who knowingly co-ordinate rational aspirations and irrational drives are bound to conform to the pattern of a civilization that breeds prejudice of itself. There is something Danaïdean about their efforts in an age of mass culture.

Effective dealing with current mental disturbances depends upon a change of our general mental climate—a change in a direction pointed out by recent French writers, such as George Blin and Camus, who explore the tabooed regions of our bodily existence with a spiritual compassion that reveals their longing for the reconciliation of reason and nature. To express such a longing means to envisage a life in which the now prevailing abstract ideals, with their vain pretence to reality, will have yielded to incentives strong and full enough to seize upon man as a whole. Only under their auspices might we be able to put our fears to good use and come to terms with the demoniac forces of nature. This is about all that can and should be said here of matters transcending the domain of formal concepts.

LETTERS FROM READERS

Slug-Ball, Immies, etc.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Milton Klonsky's memories of our streets ["The Trojans of Brighton Beach," in the May issue] have an interesting point of view, but I rather think he strongly underestimates the pastoral side of that life: where there are a waterfront and gratings in the sidewalk and the basements of houses, there is plenty that is "raw, contingent, unassorted, and particular." In fact he contradicts himself, for he speaks of collecting bottle-caps and Dixie tops (in my time, matchbooks), but these are found by keeping the eyes glued to the earth, not to the rectangles.

But what astonishes me is the following phrase: "heavy reelies made of steel." This is pure gibberish. "Reelies" are real agates, just as "immies" are imitation agates. Ball-bearings are called "steelies" (in Manhattan).

This brings me to my essential point. Despite his putative migrations, Klonsky writes with the guilty zeal of a Brooklynite, rather than with the Wordsworthian simplicity of a New Yorker. Every detail betrays his accent. For example: "Slug-ball is played . . . on a court that is four sidewalk boxes in area"—not New York, or even Bronx, boxes! Let him visit the city once, and he will see that there are required six or nine, depending. But I cannot touch this subject without quoting a poem:

A Game of Chinese Handball
(the original name of Slug-ball)

Spirit of Morty Unterman, my peerless
master and rival in all games that hurl
our planet at the wall of Fate—O from
whatever jail houses you (or if you are
asleep before me in a grave)
appear! inspire! and inspirit me!
Insolent young men, scoffing me with speed,
there's one more victory in an old dog:
return me *that* flicker of Mercury
between the black night and the rising sun!

PAUL GOODMAN

New York City (Manhattan)

A Realistic Philosophy

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I was exceedingly interested in Sidney Hook's

excellent article in the March COMMENTARY on "Intelligence and Evil in Human History."

. . . In this article Professor Hook tackles one of the most basic of philosophical problems. What I admire is the frank realism of his thinking. Man, both in the present and in history, must be taken as he is, a composite of good and evil, but able to make some distinction between good and evil, and thus to make certain judgments concerning his own behavior and certain choices as to what he will do. It is easy to be defeatist and pessimistic about man. It is almost as easy to be vapidly optimistic. To be resolutely realistic and scientific is Professor Hook's way and the right way.

Incidentally, I feel that you are maintaining an exceedingly high standard in COMMENTARY, not only with such articles as Professor Hook's but quite regularly.

BRYN J. HOVDE
President

The New School
New York City

For Liberal Self-Criticism

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Diana Trilling's review of Laura Hobson's *Gentleman's Agreement* and, in an even higher degree, her answer to her counter-critics in the April number of COMMENTARY, are the most valuable and illuminating contributions that any American periodical has recently printed. The overwhelmingly necessary intellectual act of this hour is the self-criticism of the liberals. They waited long. Years ago T. S. Eliot in his essay on "Religion and Literature" cruelly and correctly analysed the herd-mindedness of the contemporary "liberal." That "liberal" continued to think in terms of withered clichés. And any liberal who tried to break that bondage (as I did in *The Permanent Horizon* as long ago as 1934) was treated to another rubber-stamp: reactionary. My own review of *Gentleman's Agreement* in *The New Palestine* (April 1947) is, of course, more drastic and specific than Mrs. Trilling's. But her aim and mine are the same: to point out the danger of the revolting attempt of the "liberals" to destroy all concreteness, color, particularity in human

life, to neutralize and eviscerate it and, in the process, to reduce the living, suffering Jewish people to the faint shadow thrown by our few escapists from their great and tragic destiny.

LUDWIG LEWISOHN

New York City

On Isaak Babel

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

With particular pleasure I read Isaak Babel's "The Awakening" in your February issue. I think it is a beautiful story and, as far as I can judge, beautifully rendered.

For many years it has been my opinion that the two outstanding Soviet Russian story-tellers are Yuriy Tynyanov and Isaak Babel. I am sure it is by sheer coincidence—without any particular significance—that both these writers are Jews, and that both died during World War II. I had the pleasure of meeting both these men a long time ago in Berlin and Paris, and I have a most vivid impression of their engaging and charming personalities.

It is gratifying that you should reintroduce the great Russian author, Isaak Babel, to the American public.

HERMANN KESTEN

New York City

Gentlemen's Disagreement

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I do not care so much that Jacob Glatstein in his review of *Nothing is a Wonderful Thing* in the April COMMENTARY not merely failed to understand but completely misrepresented the entire meaning of the book. After all, there are *nudnicks* even among Jews and some of them are capable of describing a portrait of heart-breaking heroic struggle as being lacking in manners.

However, the point raised by Mr. Glatstein is one I think should be answered, preferably by a writer who also feels, as Mr. Glatstein evidently does, the need in this world of advocates for the Jewish cause.

I am not on several counts an impartial witness. The author of the book your reviewer read with closed eyes is my wife, and I myself have been accused in the past, as she is accused now, of doing a disservice to the Jewish people of this country by describing the facts of their life.

But let me have my say.

What is an advocate for the Jewish cause in the present world? Is he one who lies, or tells the truth? Is he one who distorts the facts to write a travel-folder about a human voyage

through life, or is he one who presents the facts truly and in whole, so that the reader may live that life for himself and understand with his heart the beauty of its spirit and the majesty of its tragedy?

I understand the longing with which Jews look to writers today to advocate their cause by painting a picture postcard of it. But I do not sympathize with it. Do they think a picture postcard will disarm anti-Semitism? Mr. Glatstein wants my wife to write of Jews as "educators . . . legislators, judges." That is exactly how Hitler wrote of them, all legislators, all judges, all international bankers—with results that are known to us all. No, there is no easy way to disarm anti-Semitism and I think those who urge on writers the easy way and thereby soothe themselves into imagining they are performing a service are the traitors and are the ones doing the disservice to the Jewish people and in fact to all people in general.

My wife did not write a book about legislators and judges and, if she had, I perhaps would have divorced her unless she had presented a true portrait of them—a portrait which would not have met the approval of Mr. Glatstein. She wrote instead a book about the greatest of all modern tragedies—the tragedy, not merely of poverty, but of people's reaction to poverty. She sang, in words that even Mr. Glatstein found "teeming and gleaming" and that I and other readers and other reviewers found ardent with pity, of souls that refused indomitably to be crushed as long as they realized that Nothing was Not (*Not*, my dear Mr. Glatstein) a Wonderful Thing, but was in fact an instrument for perpetuating their poverty.

This, I submit, is a service to the Jewish people. To attack poverty is to attack anti-Semitism at its roots. To present Jewish life in the slums truthfully is not to lack manners but to say to the world that made those slums, "See what you're doing, and see what great people you are doing it to."

Emily Post may blanch, but the struggle, Mr. Glatstein, is rude and there is blood in it.

IRA WOLFERT

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

This is a dangerous situation. What if I should fail in my rejoinder, and my wife rush to my rescue? The Wolferts and Glatsteins might be involved in a family feud for generations to come. I shall, however, brave the consequences, and attempt to clear up a misunderstanding that arose out of my review.

My criticism of Helen Wolfert's *Nothing is a Wonderful Thing* concerned itself primarily with the book as a narrative poem, and with

the "limited understanding" allotted to me, I attempted to prove that the book is a loose assortment of very bad poetry, by any accepted standards, "Jewish" or "non-Jewish." My accuser tries desperately to separate the inseparable, the "sermon" and the criticism. Only a portion of my review was devoted to a "sermon" on the Jewish angle of the book, and it is this lesser part of my review which so angered Mr. Wolfert.

I am not an apologist for Jewish life, for the simple reason that I do not believe that we have anything to conceal from the searching eye of the honest artist. But may I remind Mr. Wolfert that experience is not necessarily synonymous with art? Assuming that it was Mrs. Wolfert's experience, as a child of ten, to see the kind of East Side which she portrays in synthetic verse, her tale of woe does not, by its mere telling, become a good book. It should therefore be clear to Mr. Wolfert (and I shall not descend to his level of silly abuse) that "true" life may be very unreal and a wild exaggeration.

I did try to bring out in my brief "sermon" that in this case a double offense had been committed, for Mrs. Wolfert's picture of the East Side is sheer phantasmagoria, even, as I said before, had it really been Jennie's hard luck to live in a particularly melodramatic neighborhood. The touching appeal of "man's inhumanity to man" is singularly inapplicable in this case. The Jewish East Side as we knew it is a thing of the past. To borrow two lines from Edwin Arlington Robinson's "Stafford's Cabin": "Time has made the two of them the fuel of one flame, And all we have of them is now a legend and a name."

Yes, the Jewish East Side is now no more than a legend. To cry out for justice now about the poverty and squalor of years ago strikes me not only as Jewish apologetics but, what is worse, belated apologetics. The truth of the matter is, that even in retrospect, the clamor for justice is a misrepresentation. Tens of thousands of Jews loved the East Side. To them it was a chance for a new beginning. To all those who fled from the religious persecution and unbearable poverty of Europe, the squalor of the East Side, by comparison, appeared like comfort. The gas-meter and the kitchen sink signified deliverance from bondage. The sweat shop, and the long and dreary working hours, were rather the "blessings" of capitalism than the special curses of the East Side, and to thrust the entire problem upon this haven of refuge is not even good Marxism. The poverty of the East Side was certainly not racial, and in no way essentially different from the poverty of Red Hook or that of Little Italy.

The pathetic outcry: "See what you are doing and what great people you are doing it to," is an outcry against imaginary Pharaohs and chauvinism of the worst sort. For who were the "persecutors" of these "downtrodden" people? Quite the contrary, the East Side represented rescue to many thousands of Jews, and if anything was remarkable about this section of our metropolis, it was the spirit with which this rescue was carried out. The quick reunion of families gave the East Side congestion a spirituality which was certainly more characteristic than all its illegitimate offspring.

Come now, Mr. Wolfert, whom are you trying to kid? You're not really serious when you assert that I call for books about legislators and judges? And your calling upon Hitler to help you win an argument does you very little honor, indeed. I merely hinted that there should be some sort of a logical ratio, say, one Jewish judge to six whoring children and countless prostitutes.

The Jews of the East Side saw the realization of a dream in the public schools and unmolested synagogues. It is blasphemous to speak of ghettos or slums in connection with this heroic transplantation of a people. I did not object to Helen Wolfert's *Grapes of Wrath*. I tried merely to show that her picture of the East Side is a distortion, at best a caricature.

I thought also that my review brought out very clearly that the English-writing Jew in this country has so far contented himself with the role of an epigone. I pleaded for something more vital, for first-rate books, for a real Jewish contribution to American letters in the manner of Dreiser, Robert Frost, James, and Melville. I tried, a bit timidly perhaps, to indicate that it is this non-awareness of our spirituality which is largely responsible for the affliction of third-rateness in either direction: when we deal with Jewish themes or when we put on the mask of anonymous worldliness. How naked and devoid of the spirit of our Jewish heritage is this book *Nothing is a Wonderful Thing*! Believe me, I don't like to rub it in. I never intended to come back to this book, but Mr. Wolfert's letter invited a restatement of my opinion. I hope that I shall not be labeled a professional Jew when I say that a book by a Jewish writer, about the Jewish people, should contain a modicum of Jewish ethics.

So much for my "sermon." But sermon or no sermon, my review is clear as to the artistic merit of the book. I hold to my view that *Nothing is a Wonderful Thing* is bad poetry. On this point, I stake my poet's license against Mr. Wolfert's marriage license.

JACOB GLATSTEIN

New York City

German Guilt

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The doctrine of mass guilt is most certainly a Nazi, not a democratic, concept, as Paul Massing points out in his article "Is Every German Guilty?" in the May COMMENTARY. The very basis of democracy is the right of the individual to be tried and judged for his own acts as an individual. It is hard to understand in what kind of a world men like Max Lerner and Victor Bernstein are living, especially so since both are, in general, men of liberal views and catholicity of spirit.

I live in the deep South. I cannot accept collective guilt for many things which take place here which I hate as much as would Lerner and Bernstein. Even in this relatively free atmosphere it is impossible to stop them. It is even impossible to judge the warped viewpoints deriving from historical situations which perpetuate and make them possible.

He must be remarkably sure of his own fortitude who could answer affirmatively that he would have acted with greater courage at Oranienburg than Paul Massing did when he saluted the Swastika. Fear is a potent and demoralizing emotion and one would have had to have lived under the Nazi terror to know how he would have reacted to it. To assume that there is some innate brutality, servility, or sadism in the "character" of some seventy millions of people who happen by historical chance to be living in a certain area of central Europe is sheer nonsense.

Every individual everywhere, unless he is a religious fanatic of some sort, in order to save some shred of self-respect seeks to justify his conduct; as the psychologists say, we all tend to rationalize. Far from this being an unhealthy sign in the Germans, I consider it normal conduct that they should try to conceal their guilt—which for most of them was the guilt of not being heroes—not only from us but from themselves. Mass confessions of guilt and self-flagellations would be most abnormal and psychologically unhealthy.

When we all begin to cry out our guilt; when the American people say "Contrary to the rules of civilized warfare, we dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima and without waiting to see its effect dropped another on Nagasaki"; when we cry out that we are guilty of lynchings and cruel intolerance against minorities; when we decry our own will to power—then we may rightfully demand that others

proclaim themselves miserable sinners. But even then I won't like it, because to brand as equally guilty those who act, those who are passive in the face of wrong, and those who oppose doesn't make any sense. We will help the German people and ourselves more by aiding them to regain their own self-respect than we will by continuing to din into their ears that they are miserable sinners. We have all been shocked in recent years by the depraved depths to which human beings can fall through condemning whole groups and races to the torture. Let us not perpetuate the evil by adopting the same heresy toward the Germans which Hitler and his gang adopted toward the Jews.

ROYAL WILBUR FRANCE

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A Science of Leftovers?

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I found Nathan Glazer's article, "What is Sociology's Job?" [in the February COMMENTARY] amusing, penetrating, and thought-provoking.

Mr. Glazer seems quite correct in pointing out that American sociology—in distinction from European—has tended to concentrate on bread-and-butter *problems* and to stress *amelioration*, rather than the scientific study of society as a whole. The present disjointed and atomistic approach unfortunately tends to be perpetuated by the vested interests of departmentalization in the social science field. A more fundamental approach might involve "trespassing" in, say, the older-established and more lucrative and prestige-giving spheres of the economists and the biblical scientists, and might provoke resistance. Sociology has been termed "the science of leftovers," and in America there is some truth in this. The anthropologists, under the protective coloring of a major preoccupation with the "primitive," are at present more aggressive than the sociologists in staking out their claim to an interest in a total "science of man."

The path to scientific progress would seem to be in a better interpretation of and cooperation between the various social scientific disciplines—I *liked* the article!

ELIZABETH K. NOTTINGHAM

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

What Love is Not

EAST RIVER. By SOHEM ASCH. Translated by A. H. GROSS. New York, Putnam, 1946. 438 pp. \$3.00.

Reviewed by HAROLD ROSENBERG

SOHEM ASCH now rides his hobbyhorse of *The Nazarene* and *The Apostles*—that God is love—through the garment industry and slums of New York around the beginning of this century. Unlike the denser Jewish pockets of the lower East Side, East 48th Street by the river was already at that time an international neighborhood made up of Orthodox Jews, Catholic Irish, nostalgic Poles, chauvinistic Italians, all hungry, all overworked, all insecure. But although these folk were all, so to speak, literally melting in the same pot, they were kept at a certain distance from one another, Mr. Asch feels, by their inherited prejudices, the most pernicious of which were supplied by their religions. To allow them to live together and work together toward a happier life, and to turn them from their European pasts toward a high American future, they needed, in Mr. Asch's view, the religion of love. And the same religion was needed to get the bosses and workers together in the garment industry, so as to end the sweatshops, the subcontracting system, and destructive strikes.

Where was this religion of love to be found? Why, inside the very religions that often made these people so blind and cruel, despite their essential humanity. They had only to see that

It is an aim of this department to encourage discussion of significant issues raised by current books. Good reviewers, we have found, have independent judgment and often fresh points of view, and we afford them wide latitude for the expression of their individual opinions. (That these opinions may or may not be in accord with the opinions of the editors hardly needs mentioning.) We welcome the expression of views by authors and readers that differ from those expressed here, and we provide ample space for such discussion.

in love lay the real meaning of Judaism and Catholicism. It was definitely not a question of getting rid of the religions themselves, but of penetrating each to its core—where they would turn out to consist of the same call to love and serve one's brothers.

CARRYING out this theme, *East River* is a melodrama of love and religious differences with a *Street Scene* setting, a sort of elaborated, and of course more thoughtful, *Abie's Irish Rose*. Neglecting all other possible sources of misunderstanding among these thrown-together fragments of older communities, Mr. Asch enthusiastically applies the screws to the divisive aspects of Jewish and Catholic orthodoxy, with—and this is only good manners—Judaism getting a considerable number of extra twists.

Moshe Wolf Davidowsky, who owned a tiny grocery store on The Street, was a kindly man, almost a saint in fact, though a plain householder, not too educated. He gave food on credit to Gentile or Jew, and despite his wearying labors kept his heart open to every fellow creature. Yet this same unassuming *zaddik* was the carrier and victim of the harsh anti-human Jewish Orthodoxy. To the extent that he could, he transmitted the fear that was in it to his sons—and when one of them, Irving, was pushed beyond this fear by a flood of passion into marrying a *shikse*, old Moshe Wolf said *kaddish* for him and tried to erase his memory from his soul. Another instance was the sad separation from the Gentile Mrs. Krantz forced on Harry by Orthodox opinion. Similarly, a Catholic priest pronounced the union of Irving with Mary McCarthy no marriage, and scared the poor wife with hell-fire so that she virtually broke up their home by having their boy baptized. Yet this same priest, through his religious grasp of life, reawakened Mary to a true love of humanity.

Both Moshe Wolf and the priest agree on one thing, and Sholem Asch, despite his aggressive anti-orthodoxy, agrees with them: a human being must have a religion. Without religion, you have naked careerism and exploi-

tation. True, both Moshe Wolf and the priest fall short of the universal, but Irving, who ignores the religious when it is willing to ignore him, is worse, a typical monster of the profit system, ready to tear an economic advantage out of anyone, without discrimination as to race, sex, or creed.

The true faith is revealed in the experience of Nathan, Moshe Wolf's other son, who, stricken by infantile paralysis as a youth, passes through longing and despair to the point of giving himself up to death. He is lifted out of the pit by the conviction that he is "the instrument of a divine mission," and dedicates himself to the loving service of mankind. Nathan arrives at a personal God, a God who takes care of *him*; he is illuminated by the sensation that everything is God's gift, and this view of his salvation leads him to interpret his neighbor's problems in terms of a search for the divine.

So Nathan becomes the Messiah of East 48th Street. And the test of the seriousness of Mr. Asch's conception of life is to be found in his treatment of Nathan's experience. It turns out that Nathan is no Myshkin who suffers and lets loose upon himself and his friends the contradictions of saintliness. On the contrary, everything adjusts itself with the smoothness of a last chapter by Horatio Alger. Irving, the *shikse*-marrying exploiter, is reconciled with both his humanitarian, Orthodox father and his Irish-Catholic wife; he gives up the sweatshops and signs with the union. Moshe Wolf forsakes his earlier narrowness, and not only opens his door to his Gentile relatives, but finds a new meaning in the Seder which they attend. Everyone gets happier and more reasonable through Nathan's intervention, and those who need it are taken care of financially. There is even a scene in which a tall man, who has kept silent during a futile meeting to prevent a strike, commends Nathan for his selflessness and reveals that his name is—Franklin Roosevelt!

Obviously, it is difficult to evaluate a novel which is such a mixture of meditation and bathos, of descriptive talent and theatrical "corn," of social concern and contempt, partly conscious, for the reader and the medium of fiction. There are touching perceptions in Asch's account of Nathan's convalescence and the alternations of despair and faith that come out of it. These perceptions can hardly feel comfortable in the same brain with oceans of clichés like: "There is a love intoxication which can so overwhelm a man as to make him capable

of any crime in order to win the woman he yearns for," and melting "scenes" that probably have made the composers of soap operas reach for their files. We must assume that Asch is either unwilling or unable to distinguish that in his experience which is authentic and could bear struggling with, and that which is simply rhetorical and pictorial grist for the best-seller.

LET us examine briefly, however, Mr. Asch's interpretation of the life of East 48th Street as a challenge to the religions of the past and as a justification for a new or revived one. As we have indicated, it seems to him that the chief difficulty of the immigrant Jews lay in the exclusionary character of their religious beliefs and practices.

Now, undoubtedly their dietary laws, *Shabbas*, horror of inter-marriage, did exert a strong pull away from their neighbors. But so did their other peculiarities not so directly derived from their religious conceptions—speech, manners, family feelings, temperament. In fact, their whole beings, shaped by their community life in "the old country," tended to set them apart. Their religious rituals and taboos were reflections as well as causes of an actual community separateness. So that if being set apart is an evil, it is not merely an evil pertaining to certain differentiating beliefs and rites but to the very fact of existing in one's own way and having one's own peculiar history and physiognomy.

Hence Mr. Asch, who does not want the Jews set apart, should assert his opposition not merely to the divisive concepts and practices of Orthodoxy—which here appear as means, not ends—but to the whole fact of a Jewish community life, insofar as it has the density, tightness, and stylistic uniqueness of a historical religious community and is not merely a possibility of secular organization. But in that case he should also be against religion, because you can't have a religion, and there's no point to it, without a community solidarity.

Why isn't it possible to salvage from Judaism and Christianity a religion based purely on the love of mankind? Why cannot this prophetic concept be extracted from the strait and sometimes hate-producing rituals and taboos in which it has appeared and be embraced as the principle of a higher religion in which human solidarity replaces the isolated and mutually repellent communities of the past?

In abstraction one can perform on existing religion such an operation which severs the

evils of narrow community solidarity (with its orthodoxy that produces Jews and Catholics and Baptists) from the ideal human solidarity in which all men are brothers. Obviously, however, in doing this one is dealing with human relations as if they were a relation of concepts. But religion is not a system of abstractions; it is a concrete way of living. What distinguishes the religious love of mankind from the rationalists' human brotherhood is that the religious vision of human solidarity is inseparable from the concreteness of actual living solidarity that it derives from the existing community which sets boundaries and excludes.

Thus genuine, rather than sentimental, religious universalism is involved in a contradiction: it cannot choose between Jew (or Christian) and Man but must regard the Jew and his community as the seed of the concept Man and of his future home. Accordingly, the saints of human brotherhood have obeyed the rituals which compel Judaism, or Catholicism, to be nothing but itself, which set a point at which Jews or Catholics are identical with one another and stop short absolutely from identity with outsiders, which enforce a community solidarity with impassable limits. In short, they supported the community solidarity with its stopping short, though it contradicted and negated their hope of human solidarity.

But precisely in this contradiction lies the specific tension of Western religious thinking—that the ritual that sets his community apart is to the saint the living basis of the divine solidarity of all mankind. The sentimentalist, with his all-good religion, escapes this tension.

The contradiction between the set-apart community and the whole of mankind is not resolved in religious thought. It is transcended by a leap of passion—the love of all mankind. Through love the real, that is, limited, community, removed by its ritual from all others, is converted into the ideal community of Man, in which all communities accept a single ritual. Without the limiting ritual there could be no leap of love. Without *his* ritual becoming universal there can be no community of mankind for the Jewish prophet or Christian saint. Western religions, it thus seems, have two movements, one inwards toward the community, the other outwards towards Man, who could have one community, one ritual—and this breathing, so to speak, of the community is fundamental in the religious relation to the world.

The "religion" of an isolated individual like Nathan, who feels himself providentially saved and united with all that is living, has thus nothing to do with either Judaism or Catholicism, except in a negative sense, and no pertinence to the predicament of those wisps of communities that were wafted to East 48th Street. Dissociated from communal practice, i.e., orthodoxy, the generalization of the cosmic sentiment is not religion but a philosophy of individual experiment that can lead anywhere. If we have such a philosophy let us first strive to make its implications clear rather than giving ourselves Messianic airs.

For the Jews of East 48th Street the issue was not the abstract one: does Judaism or Catholicism keep people apart (it's miserably hard to keep apart in a slum anyway) instead of uniting them? The issue was the historical one: how long would it take before the old community disintegrated into its smallest particles, individuals, and was drawn off magnetically into other communities? From the point of view of the fate of these East 48th Street Jews as embodiments of a cultural entity, it mattered little whether their children abandoned them by the road of Americanization, internationalism, materialism, or universal love. Their problem was not amenable to any solution, certainly none so simple as that of a purified religion. If a true appraisal of the destiny of its characters is more important in a novel than the author's theories of how to save the world, Sholem Asch should have made it clear that the Jewish community and its religion as they had existed on East 48th Street were both bound to disintegrate.

The Great Wall of Criticism

THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA. By FRANZ KAFKA. Translated by WILLA and EDWIN MUIR. New York, Schocken Books, 1946. 315 pp. \$3.00.

THE KAFKA PROBLEM. Edited by ANGEL FLORES. New York, New Directions, 1946. 468 pp. \$5.00.

Reviewed by WILLIAM PHILLIPS

THE estrangement of Kafka seems to persist in the fate of his writings. For no modern figure of comparable genius—not even Joyce—has had

so many barriers erected between himself and his readers. No doubt this is partly due to the strange and compressed sensibility of Kafka's writing, which has dispensed with those routines of common experience that provide the structure of the traditional novel. But even more important is the abysmally low level of Kafka criticism, most of which is obscurantist, pretentious, and misinformed, turned out by people who are just not up to the subject. At best it has been (with but a few exceptions) a tortured analysis of the obvious; at worst—perhaps we had better not describe it at this point.

WHAT appears to have puzzled many of Kafka's commentators and sent them scurrying to find the ideological clue to his work is the deceptive simplicity of his surface. For while it is continuously resonant with larger meanings, Kafka's fiction is at the same time self-sufficient in the sense that it always seems to contain, on the face of it, the whole story. And the fact is that this combination of tone and overtone is rather unusual in modern literature, though it does suggest an extreme form of the symbolist tradition. In the case of Kafka, however, what we have is not a symbolist approach, but precisely the opposite, an attempt to present directly the actual quality of his experience. Perhaps the closest analogue in modern writing is Dostoevski's *Notes From Underground*; but where Dostoevski felt the need to objectify and to be self-conscious, Kafka simply projects his own being.

At bottom, of course, this can be understood as a neurotic phenomenon, and it does account for the fact that Kafka's psychic drives are worked into all his writing. But, insofar as Kafka's self-projection has taken a literary form, it has encompassed and fused all the strains of his thinking. Hence most of Kafka's stories will be found to contain at once the Kierkegaardian theme of coping with the spiritual vacuum with one's own moral resources (which is merely a generalization of Kafka's private feelings), the alienation of the Jew, the oppressiveness of the social hierarchy, and the forebodings of guilt and persecution. All of these themes, however, are conveyed on the level of *sheer existence*, on the level, that is, of Kafka's state of mind. As a result, Kafka's fictional world has the contingency and lack of apparent motivation that we face in immediate experience. One need not ask why Gregor Samsa, for instance, became a monstrous bug, or why K. was never informed

of the charges against him in *The Trial*: one simply recognizes such situations as hidden fatalities that may or may not come to the surface but are nevertheless part of the texture of our lives.

In *The Great Wall of China* (just made available again in a new American edition) one finds most of the characteristic Kafkan themes. But in each case they are contained within some obsessive situation that opens the wounds of one's existence. All creative fiction reaches its extreme and critical instants when some character relives his entire life or the feeling of all existence is momentarily communicated. What Kafka does, however, is to maintain a kind of permanent crisis, which loads each particular experience with the sum of all experience. Thus the subconscious dog in *Investigations of a Dog*, whose life is a parable of man's plight and his relation to the forces of the unknowable, actually reveals himself to us through the sensations of estrangement and slow death. Similarly, *The Burrow* lays bare the tensions of all human effort through the primitive and immediate feeling of anxiety that expresses the condition of the hunter and the hunted. And *The Great Wall of China* is a generalization of those moments when Kafka must have felt humbled by the inscrutability of human tradition, moral law, and, above all, the ways of God. It is this rendering of *one's total experience* at all times—in the same way that the total experience of an individual wells up in him at any given time—that accounts for the constant ambiguity, the play of symbolism, and the ironic oppositions in all of Kafka's writing.

THE failure, I believe, to grasp this essential character of Kafka's work is responsible for the prevailing misconceptions, most of which can be found in the anthology of essays on Kafka under the title *The Kafka Problem*. In this respect the volume is a masterpiece of editing, for surely it must have required considerable talent to represent every variety of critical nonsense and banality. Apparently such was the purpose of the volume, for I can find no other reason for leaving out several important studies of Kafka by Hannah Arendt, Philip Rahv, and others—especially since some of the pieces included make no sense by themselves, being polemics against critics who have not been represented. In all fairness, however, I should add that the unity of the collection has been somewhat marred by some excellent essays, notably

by Albert Camus and Claude-Edmonde Magny, a young French critic.

Most of the other pieces ride some personal notion or some half-baked thesis. Thus there are some brief reminiscences of Kafka by several European writers, whose own egos somehow manage to loom larger than the personality of Kafka. On the other hand, the theoreticians present us with a variety of "interpretations," all plugging some extreme view of Kafka's work and all canceling each other out. Perhaps the oldest distortion is Max Brod's attempt—in a kind of Zionist Emersonianism—to squeeze a Jewish oversoul out of Kafka. Less sectarian and more fashionable, however, is the Protestant non-denominational view taken by a number of critics who have transferred Kafka into a pure theologian. On the secular side, there are a number of "social" approaches, some of which argue that Kafka's fiction was basically a protest against the injustices of modern society, while others berate Kafka for his reactionary and "escapist" attitudes. And over the entire volume hovers the specter of Freud, making most of the critics uneasy and fearful of either overestimating or underestimating the neurotic strain in Kafka's writing—as though unable to decide whether it was a liability or an asset.

In addition, the collection contains some foolish essays that are difficult to classify. One of these by an English anarchist writer, for example, tries to prove, in a remarkably self-assured way, that Kafka is an inferior version of Rex Warner, an English imitator of Kafka, who has pinned down the meandering social meanings of his master. Another, by an Argentinian writer, finds Kafka an expression of the age of intuition and the breakdown of reason, the features of this new age having been defined by Quantum Physics and the Theory of Relativity—which in some unexplained way are taken to have enthroned the principle of intuition.

But the two highlights of this anthology are the pieces by Edwin Berry Burgum and Charles Neider, one being an application of the current Stalinist position to Kafka, the other a free-lance form of absurdity. Burgum's line, concocted by jumbling the known facts of Kafka's life and by ignoring the ambiguities and subtleties that make up his art, is that Kafka was a "diseased personality" who failed to unmask the role of capitalism, whose attitude "anticipates the psychology of fascism," and whose fictional hero, "like Mr. Hoover and Mr. Westbrook

Pegler, fears the combined aggression of the working class. . . ." In short, Kafka was not cast in the heroic proletarian image of Michael Gold. It should be noted, however, that Burgum's attack is rather restrained as compared with that of his Stalinist compatriots in France, who recently raised the question whether, in the interest of the revolution, Kafka's works should not be destroyed.

Neider's tack is just the reverse, for what he tries to do is to save Kafka for rationalism. So far as I can make him out, Neider's point seems to be that there has been some kind of supernaturalist plot to steal Kafka from the naturalists, with the apparent implication that there are two organized bodies of critical opinion—the naturalists and the supernaturalists—fighting for the spirit of Kafka. And Neider's appointed task is to win Kafka back to the camp of social progressivism, psychological health, and the life of reason. As a result, Neider has converted the great tragic underground man of the modern period into an apostle of good will and uplift—into a kind of liberal missionary with the most up-to-date opinions on what is best for man and society.

Poor Kafka, to be thus thrown to the Philistines. But the question is even larger than the fate of Kafka. For what we are witnessing is a general relaxation of critical standards, with the result that almost anything can be palmed off these days as serious criticism. The reasons for this are of course tied in with the entire cultural situation. And in so far as a creative optimism may be said to be the occupational disease of the writer, one likes to think of the present state as a temporary slump. If not—I just hope Joyce is not the next victim.

Italy's Jews

THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS IN ITALY.

By CECIL ROTH. Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society of America, 1946. 575 pp. \$3.00.

Reviewed by JOSHUA STARR

THE long course of Italian-Jewish history, extending from pre-Christian times to our own day, comprises in a degree every facet of the evolution of Jewish life in Europe. Before undertaking this first comprehensive study of the subject, Cecil Roth had already made an impressive contribution to our knowledge of

Jewish history in Italy. Every page of this large *History* shows his erudition, and the skill with which he traces regional variations over a period of two thousand years is of a very high order. He has marshaled a huge store of facts, and while the reader's interest may flag at certain points, there are some chapters that merit special praise.

The best part of this book is undoubtedly Chapter V, "The Renaissance," which is written with a genuine feeling for the conflicting currents in the sphere of Jewish-Christian relations. The first generation of the 16th century brought a foretaste of the Emancipation to the Jewish intellectuals and the few rich families. This development was, however, a phase of a humanist, individualistic upsurge, an avant-garde that lacked the social purpose which drove the Franciscan fanatics, who were a redoubtable force directed against the Jews. While some of the Jews found a liberal regime in Ferrara and enjoyed a degree of stability in Florence, the age of the ghetto and the Counter Reformation was at hand. By 1550 Italy was lost to European progress and for three centuries its Jewish communities struggled against endless vexations. Roth's 90-page chapter on the ghettos unfolds the broad panorama of a struggle for social and cultural self-preservation, one of the best descriptive pieces in the Jewish historical literature known to this reviewer. The author has succeeded in bringing to life in all their lighter as well as their somber aspects the Jewries of the 16-18th centuries (in Rome until 1870). The relative security of the ghetto system and its advantages for the enforcement of social control within the group are somewhat difficult to appreciate in our time, but there were significant positive features in that context. On the other hand, the physical and spiritual conditions of the system as a whole deteriorated. Relentless exploitation by the Papacy and other regimes drove the communities into bankruptcy, and by the end of the 18th century the typical ghetto resident was an underprivileged wretch.

It would have been helpful if Dr. Roth had compared the deterioration of ghetto life with conditions on the outside. With the exception of Venice, the towns in question were under governments improvised by force, chance, or mishap. Highly reputed as the princes and dukes of Italy may have been in the eyes of contemporary Europe, their ability was cancelled by unbridled appetites and chronic intrigues. Political freedom and a sense of re-

sponsibility on the part of public officials were extremely rare. The ghettos were getting the worst of a bad situation, an experience not of course uncommon in Jewish history.

IN VIEW of the relative dearth of interesting material before the 13th century, the earlier chapters of this *History* suffer rather than benefit from Dr. Roth's tendency to pile on detail. While the author has utilized the sources for the 10-13th centuries to good advantage, certain objections may be raised. There were important Jewish communities that weathered the successive invasions of Southern Italy until the 13th century, and these formed a cultural pocket, an outpost of the Palestinian center in an age dominated by the *geonim* in Babylonia. Dr. Roth's account of the manner in which this sector of Italian-Jewish life was stifled, however, leaves room for improvement. Thus, he accepts the tale of a contemporary preacher in the north, according to whom pious Charles II of Naples (of the Angevin dynasty) decreed the conversion of the Jews as a punishment for a ritual murder. But the familiar motif implied here—popular hostility to the Jews and the monarch's response thereto—cannot be squared with the contemporary documents in the royal archives. This lapse of toleration was not signaled by a decree nor officially attributed to any specific provocation. The distinctive factor in the situation was the Inquisition, which, running ahead of the king, devoted three or four years (1290-93) to the task of converting the Jews and driving out the recalcitrants. The pattern of rapid mass conversions and expulsions characterizing the Crusades period does not fit the special case of Southern Italy, where the broader economic activities of the Jews as compared with Northern Europe made for healthy relations with the surrounding population. The trend of the power wielded by the Inquisition is further illustrated by the bloody extinction of the large Muslim colony of Lucera in 1300, a community of considerable value to the royal treasury. The fate of the Jews and Muslims constituted victories scored by the Inquisition, which were achieved by putting pressure on Charles II and without arousing any popular support.

The reader of Dr. Roth's detailed sections on this region is, moreover, given no word of its steady economic deterioration as a result of the shifting of the centers of Mediterranean commerce and of exploitation by foreign rulers. Although this trend began at least four cen-

turies before the final expulsion of the Jews in 1541, Dr. Roth is ready to attribute the woeful condition of Southern Italy largely to the latter event. This is an unfortunate instance of misreading the context of an event in Jewish history.

SIMILAR thoughts are provoked occasionally by Dr. Roth's views regarding more recent developments. He tells the interesting story of how the ghettos were galvanized into action by the fleeting taste of liberty brought to Italy by the French Revolution and Napoleon's troops. The liberal patriotic movement, which culminated in a unified kingdom in 1870, swept the Jews into its ranks and opened a vista of a normal life in a progressive society. Remarking on the rapidity with which the newly enfranchised Jews were transformed into hundred per cent Italians, Dr. Roth says that, with a two-thousand-year record of residence, the Jew "was as much a native as any other component of the Italian people. . . . There was in the vast mass of the people not even the *arrière pensée* of anti-Jewish feeling." At this late date, however, the resort to the argument of "nativism" in order to explain liberal treatment of the Jews is open to obvious criticism. It would seem more relevant to place this process in relation to the outlook of Italian nationalism in its hour of triumph. Here was a victory over both the Papacy and the Metternich system. The defeated camps were both characterized in varying degree by an anti-Jewish policy, and no supporter of the nationalist movement could be excluded from the fruits and tasks of the new Italy because of his status in the rejected past. The very pace of the Jews' assimilation shows their corresponding determination to thrust that past into complete oblivion. Thereafter the maintenance of communal life was to depend largely on the leadership of a few men brought in from less assimilated communities abroad.

Democratic capitalism endured a bare half-century in Italy, and the implications of its passing in 1922 could not be sensed by the Jewish group, so largely identified with the bourgeoisie. This delicate point is dismissed by Dr. Roth with the easy remark that the Jews were neither more nor less culpable in this acceptance of fascism than the population at large. But the point is that fascism was an ordeal for the mass of wage-earners and the peasantry, while for the middle classes and big business, the corporate state was a bulwark

against socialism. Jewish participants in the opposition to fascism necessarily remained outside the official Jewish community, which for its part was, of course, compelled to be acquiescent.

This *History* will rank high among the many regional studies on which to a large extent every effort toward the interpretation of Jewish history must depend. Unfortunately, in view of the diverse development of the various political units embraced in the term Italy, it is impossible to discern any central trend in Italian-Jewish history. This diversity, moreover, magnifies the task of correlating the data bearing on the Jews with the relevant background. While Dr. Roth is cognizant of this aspect of his task, he tends to dispose of it rather hastily. Much as his achievement in producing this comprehensive book will be appreciated, its value for the interpretation of Jewish history is affected by that weakness.

Mythical Vienna

LEGEND OF A MUSICAL CITY. By MAX GRAF. New York, Philosophical Library, 1945. 302 pp. \$3.00.

Reviewed by KURT LIST

THE glamorized picture of Johann Strauss's waltzing Vienna did not originate in Hollywood. Nor is it limited to Hollywood. The myth has taken in many a Viennese himself. Witness this book, through which the cloying sentiment of Strauss's violins finds its way into music criticism.

Max Graf, a prominent Viennese critic who spent the years of his exile in New York, treats music and the episodes that marked its recent history solely as personal reminiscences; he knew Brahms, Bruckner, Goldmark, Mahler, Richard Strauss, Schoenberg, and many others, personally—which he never lets you forget. He was also acquainted with the intrigues of the court and the pleasantries of middle-class life.

True, musical Vienna was all that, but it was also much more. From the time that Viennese society preferred shallow Italians to Mozart until the days when Schoenberg had to emigrate to Berlin to find an appropriate field for his activities, Vienna presented to the world the picture of itself that Mr. Graf reproduces—as superficial, pleasure-seeking. Yet at the same time it was host to the greatest minds in music. Living on the fruits of the

Hapsburg empire, the Viennese clung to the status quo as the one guarantee of the good life. Yet Vienna was provincial and conservative to such a degree that Friedrich Engels called it Europe's China. And yet again, it was the capital of a state composed of many nations, hated for its official superior position in that state—and therefore it was not given to any illusions.

With its strange mixture of conservatism, scepticism, provincialism, and cosmopolitanism, Vienna provided ideal soil for a culture that drew its strength from feudal residues, but at the same time was bourgeois in form and far transcended the limitations of any national culture.

Vienna reached the cultural heights it did because it received, as no other place did, a life-giving infusion from a group of people whose energy, powers of imagination, and recent arrival in Western culture combined to make them invigorating salt for a decaying world. Vienna, the capital of an empire that was oriented toward the West yet included the darkest ghetto regions of Galicia and the Bukovina, opened its doors to thousands of Jews whom Emperor Joseph II's edict of tolerance permitted to integrate themselves into Western culture and, in the process of this integration, to give this culture a new life. Despite repeated anti-Semitic attacks and many political differences, Vienna became a unique laboratory in which a peaceful *modus vivendi* between Gentile and Jew was worked out. This functioned for almost a hundred and fifty years with increasing success.

The potentialities for failure were quite obvious, however, to the generation after the First World War. Vienna had by then become a shambles in the midst of which the Social Democrats tried to preserve the former cultural glory in the face of the permanent obstruction of the Catholic government's anti-Semitic rowdies. That government was often actively supported by the upper middle-class Jews of Vienna. The older generation of Viennese Jews, to which Max Graf belonged, served as the guinea pigs of this experiment without realizing it.

Having rescued their imperial and regal charm in American exile, those of them lucky enough to escape now stand perplexed before the ruins of the past. Mr. Graf attempts to explain the catastrophe by probing into Austria's past, pointing to the anti-Semitic attacks on

Goldmark, the intrigues against Mahler, and the resistance to Schoenberg. But at no point does he grasp the inner impulses and the consequences of Vienna's downfall. Nor does he realize that Vienna denied itself its final triumph in art by denying its Jewish musicians their right to live.

Nor did the collapse of the Austrian Republic come about for the reasons Mr. Graf now offers. On the contrary, the Republic collapsed precisely for the same reasons that in the past had enabled Austria to produce the great music the author admires. Austria was a semi-feudal state dependent on the colonial exploitation of the neighboring Balkans, and it could not survive in a society in which all forces strove toward the utmost industrial development of the European continent. The milieu that had provided Brahms and Mahler with a graceful, leisurely background for their activity as composers could no longer resist the pressure of history by the time Mr. Graf's generation had matured.

Mr. Graf concludes his book in a fit of that simulated, inexhaustible optimism that is characteristic of all Viennese from waiter to minister of finance: "Great composers may hear this music (the Viennese music in the earth and in the air) and listen to the melodies. It is they who will add a new chapter to the glorious old book *The Legend of a Musical City*, the leaves of which the roaring storm of our time is turning up." But he might as well have finished his travelogue for American tourists by saying, "And so, with heavy hearts, we lift anchor and leave the shores of beautiful Vienna for the modern reality of Jew-baiting and atomic bombs."

Slave and Freedman

A STAR POINTED NORTH. By EDMUND FULLER. New York, Harper, 1946. 361 pp. \$2.75.

THERE WAS ONCE A SLAVE: THE HEROIC STORY OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS. By SHIRLEY GRAHAM. New York. Julian Messner, 1947. 310 pp. \$3.00.

Reviewed by OSCAR HANDLIN

THE appearance of Frederick Douglass in the North in 1841 put an effective and exciting instrument at the disposal of the abolitionists. Those who had formerly preached the evils of

slavery in the abstract could now point to a living example redeemed out of bondage, a chattel who spoke and acted like a man. In the two decades before liberation, this fugitive slave played a prominent part in the feverish agitation to put an end to the South's peculiar institution.

It is not for the details of his life, however, that we would welcome two new books on this man. Douglass himself gave us those in his autobiography, in a far more moving and more authentic manner. If these volumes have anything to offer, it is light on the nature of the reform movements in which the escaped slave participated. For his were years of continual crisis, of desperate fears and unlimited hopes, years when heated energies were turned toward the realization of a whole range of reforms for the improvement of humanity. In that context the Douglass story has a striking validity in our own day when good men are again fighting for good causes, and again find themselves enmeshed in unforeseen and frustrating consequences.

Precisely here, both these books fall short of their mark. Both take note of Douglass' part as a reformer, but they diverge significantly in their discussion of the nature of the reform movement in which he acted. Miss Graham, throughout, proceeds under the naive assumption that all reformers were brothers under the skin: all meant well and therefore all were good. Furthermore, all reforms were created equal; the fight to repeal the English corn laws, for instance, was on the same footing as abolition. The agonizing disagreements over ends, as well as over tactics and methods, are dismissed or concealed beneath a false assumption of unity of ultimate objective.

Mr. Fuller's novel is more accurate in this respect. Its author is aware that there was a fundamental difference between the principles of political action espoused by Douglass and the open violence of John Brown or the non-

resistance advocated by William Lloyd Garrison. Although this author's sympathies are with his hero and with his hero's methods, he does set forth the divisive issues that often loomed larger for the reformers than the common enemy.

But Mr. Fuller cannot confront the logical outcome. His book ends with the Civil War despite the fact that its subject lived thirty years longer, and in those three decades discovered some of the consequences of his earlier political position. Douglass became a Republican party hack, grew personally wealthy by political office, was involved in the unsavory failure of the Freedman's Savings and Trust Company, and served as unwitting tool for American imperialism in the Caribbean. Surely the latter half of this man's career has light to throw on the earlier, and Mr. Fuller's apparent unwillingness to contemplate the unpleasant fruit points to a failure to understand the parent stem. The later Douglass was undeniably the product of the earlier, but there is nothing in the account of the earlier to explain the acts of the later.

Miss Graham rushes in where Mr. Fuller fears to tread. The good and the evil are still distinct and discernible, and all those on the right side are good, although some are unaccountably misguided. Douglass is good, Senator Sumner is good, and President Grant is good, and all is befogged by a hopelessly cheerful vagueness as to motives, causes, and results.

We can no more be satisfied with such simple analysis in historical retrospect than we would be satisfied with it as a guide to current action. Increasingly we come to learn that, in politics at least, goodness is not all of one piece. Benevolence of intentions sometimes masks dangers that can only be exposed by examination of means and motives. And the good that men hope to do is often buried with them while derisive consequences live long after.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

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